

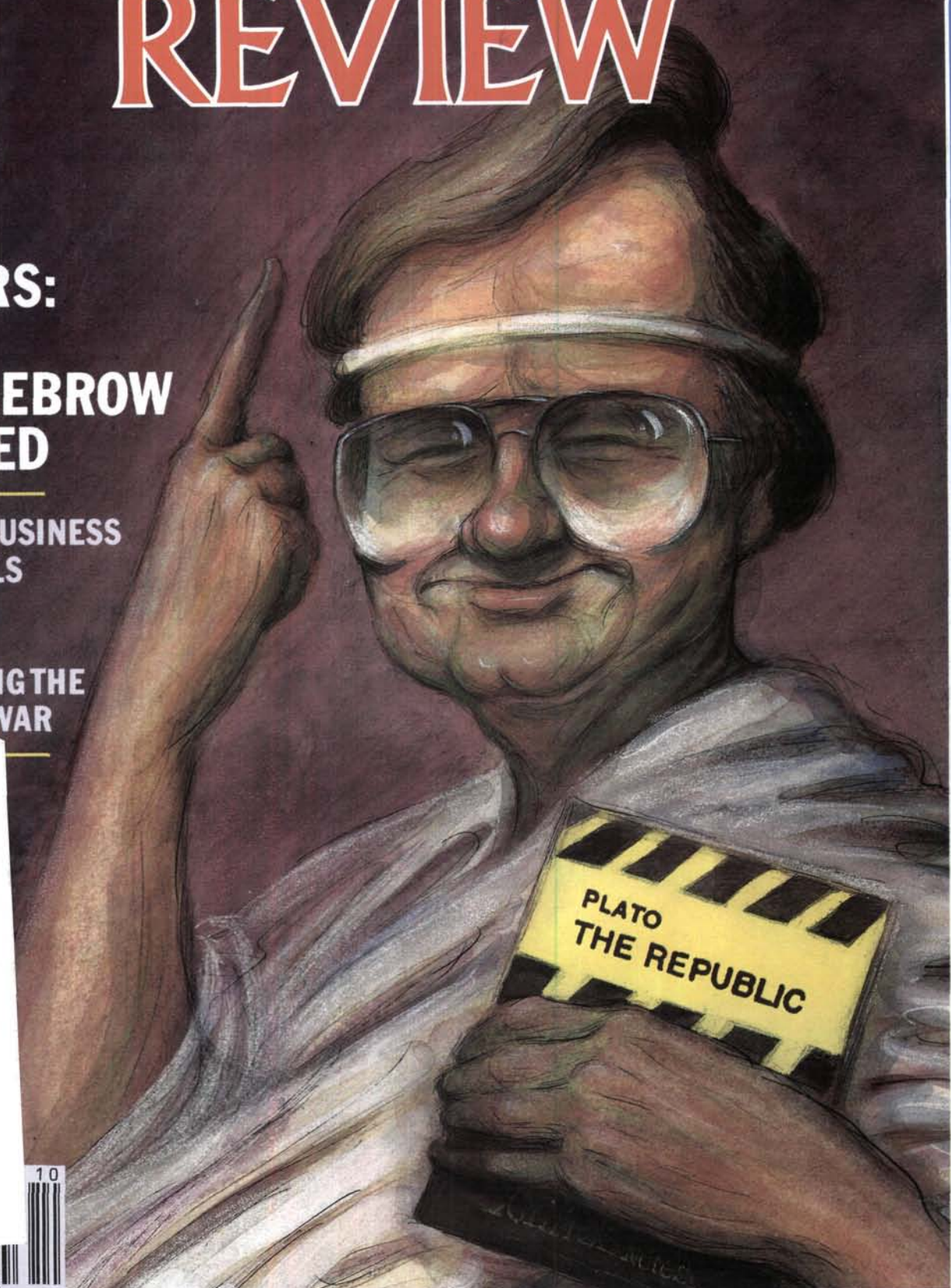
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NATIONAL REVIEW

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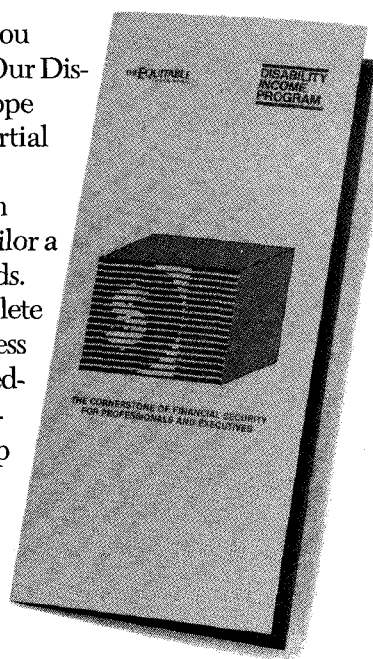
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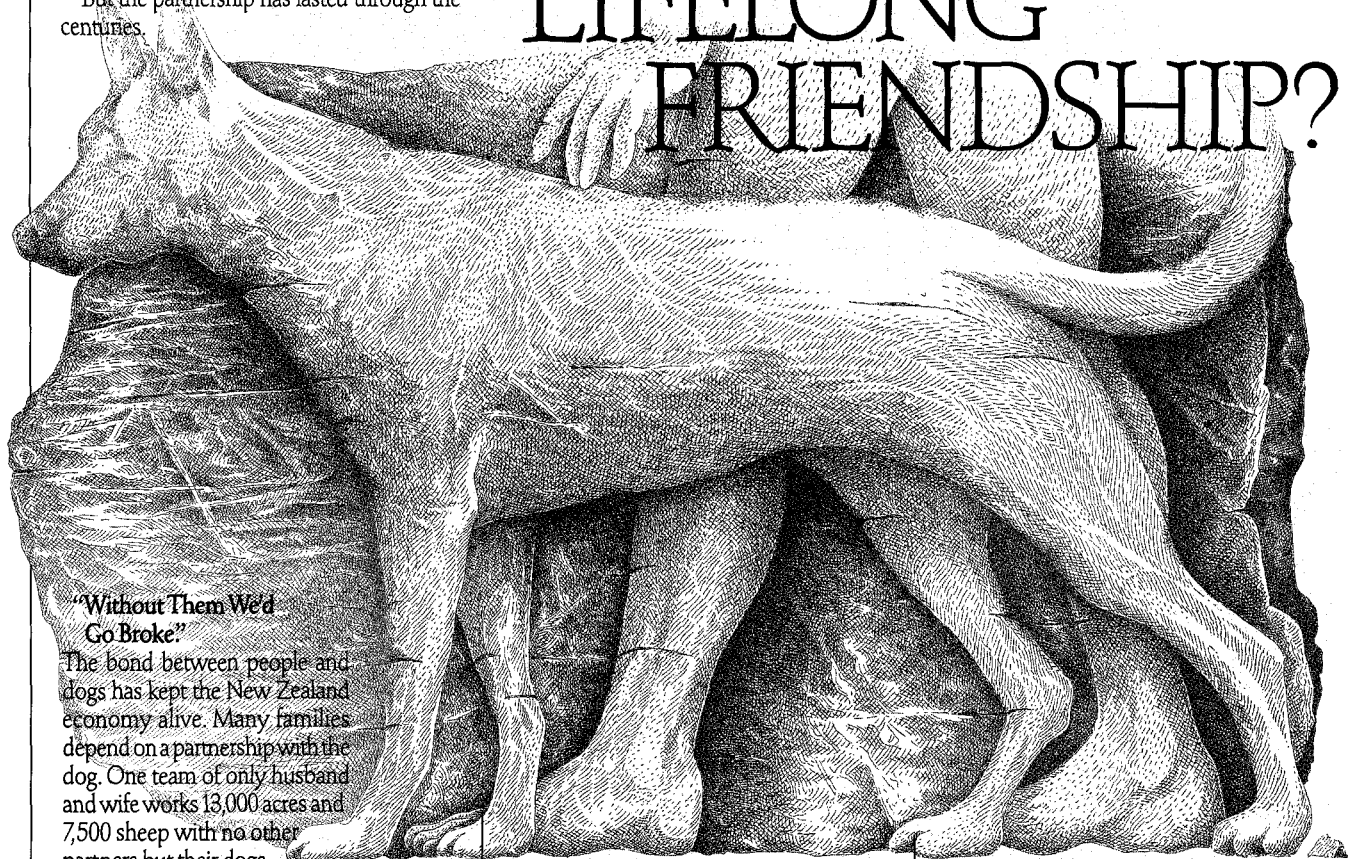
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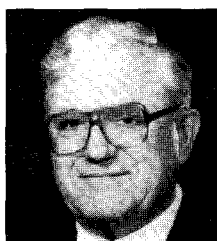
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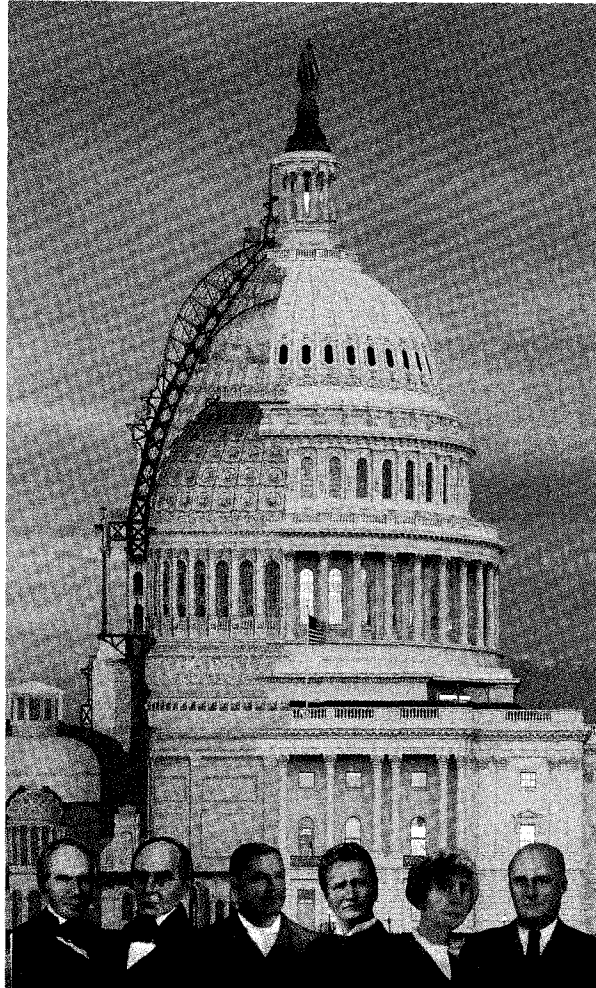
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LETTERS

Only the Bad Die Young

Stuart Goldman's article "That Old Devil Music" [Feb. 24] is actually about the pathetic and horrendous new version of rock, heavy metal—not the "Rock of Ages." For only three paragraphs does Mr. Goldman discuss the present state to which old-time rock 'n' rollers have evolved. And his only real criticisms are that "rhythmic rock" has turned into "an assault on the human ear"; and that, although rock tries to perpetuate "the myth of eternal youth" there are now "middle-aged rockers . . . marked by crows' feet and double chins." But to prove his case he criticizes (very poorly) the Traveling Wilburys, a group made up of five very good older rockers.

His criticisms of the "aged" have no relevance to the perversions of heavy metal. The Traveling Wilburys are a delight—lots of good rhythm, fun lyrics, and wonderful singing—and it is a shame that Roy Orbison "expired" because, even at 52, he had one of the best voices in all of music. And the other four have retained their genuine talents. Sure, there are a lot of metal heads on the scene singing grotesque songs in grotesque costumes to grotesque audiences. But at the same time REM, Tom Petty, U2, Robert Cray, Edie Brickell and the New Bohemians, and others are producing some excellent music that neither copies nor destroys the vision and rhythm of the early rockers.

Mr. Goldman's article is a good read, and it illustrates very well the scum and hypocrisy not only of much of the rock-music industry, but of pop culture in general in what is becoming, more and more, a very liberal society. But it does no justice to Buddy Holly and Elvis to lump their genuine successors in with those who have betrayed them.

C. J. Miller

Philadelphia, Pa.

One's Castle, Another's Shack

I read with interest M. D. Aeschliman's "No More Shacks" [Dec. 30]. What particularly intrigued me was the idea of "sweat equity"—contributing one's own sweat and blood to building one's own house. The result, I assume, is pride and a sense of ownership that encourages the owner to maintain the residence—regardless of how poor the owner. Good. I hope it works.

When I was a young man in Austin, Texas, my family went back and forth between poverty and lower-middle-class "comfort," depending on whether my father was employed or not. One summer, I worked for his construction company, which had received a contract to renovate a low-income housing project in the city. Many of the company's workers in fact lived in the community, and we all set about our work with the notion that we were doing a "good deed." By the time the work was completed, however, we were all disgusted.

As we toiled throughout the day, we were routinely accosted by groups of able-bodied young men who called us fools for working for wages less than their welfare and unemployment checks. Many offered us drugs. As time went on, the harassment grew worse; we were even shot at a couple of times. Nevertheless, we finished the job. It became a model of what a low-income community could look like. We received no thanks from the residents, but felt some satisfaction nonetheless.

Several years later I came home on leave from the military, and my father and I visited that housing project. Imagine my shock. The community looked, well, as if it had sustained continuous shelling from the *USS New Jersey*. Everything we had built was destroyed. All the grass, shrubs, and trees had died or had been uprooted. And the same residents I remembered from before were still there.

At the time, my father was out of work. But our house was immaculate, the yard well cared for. Everyone was scrubbed and well fed. And my father refused to even entertain the idea of accepting unemployment compensation. He found work again, with another construction company—with a contract to renovate low-income housing.

Wray R. Johnson
Springfield, Va.

The Switch Is On

The undersigned is a "Reagan Democrat" who voted for Reagan in 1980 and 1984, endorsed and contributed to Bush's presidential campaign, and went for Nixon against Senator McGovern in 1972, out of national-security considerations. I would like to add to what Milton Himelfarb wrote about in the November 7

issue ["Jackson, the Jews, and the Democrats"].

At least 90 per cent of the Jews who have recently emigrated to the United States from the Soviet Union voted for Bush, having seen at close hand the failure of statist solutions in Russia and the terrible excesses in loss of personal freedom that resulted. In addition, Orthodox Jews in the U.S. voted 3 to 1 in favor of Bush.

Mrs. Horwin and I were in Israel before, during, and after the U.S. elections in November, and found an overwhelming preference for Bush among Israelis. They had concluded, as Reagan demonstrated, that nothing will substitute for national strength and purpose. As Margaret Thatcher observes in "Reagan's Leadership, America's Recovery" [Dec. 30]: "For strength, not weakness, leads to peace."

*Leonard Horwin
Former U.S. Diplomat
Former Mayor of Beverly Hills
Beverly Hills, Calif.*

The Love Cry of Ayn Rand

Granted, many consider Ayn Rand's *We the Living* an anti-Soviet novel. After all, it tells the truth about the USSR. But

Sobran's thoughts notwithstanding ["Mussolini Shrugged," Jan. 27], this is merely incidental to the story, which is about the unworthiness of the love-object.

Despite zero knowledge of Miss Rand's love life, I have always felt that she wrote *We the Living* after finding her boyfriend in her best friend's bed. The book is filled with lovers betrayed. Andrei loves Communism, which, when he confronts it with the choice of jailing two corrupt Party hacks or freeing their frontman, shows its unworthiness by freeing Leo and Kira. And Kira is just using Andrei for the sake of her own lover, who drops her to become a gigolo. (While Sobran may feel he is leaving her because of her fooling around with Andrei, in the book, if not in the movie, he flatly states he is not interested in why, or even if, she had the affair with Andrei. He is just looking out for himself.) Then we have the lovers lying to each other, parents betraying children, children betraying parents, etc. Even the West is used as a love-object, which betrays by its failure even to try to free those in the USSR.

Miss Rand probably used 1920s Russia as background simply because she knew it. Of course, since Communism

had been one of the big political loves of the day, a negative picture of it fit well with her theme of love gone wrong. But it is just background to the story.

*David Carl Argall
La Puente, Calif.*

Israel as Goliath

I am surprised at your departure from realistic perception of foreign affairs when it comes to Israel. Your editorial "Israel, the PLO, and the U.S. (Us)" ["The Week," Jan. 27] cites the dovish, socialist Abba Eban's claim that Israel has little to fear from the PLO because of its military power.

The PLO is not seeking a military victory; it is relying on soft-hearted souls to support its claims for self-determination. Repeatedly the PLO has set forth the pattern that will lead to victory: first a state in the administered territories, then the Galilee, and finally the right of millions of Arabs to return to their homes in Tel Aviv, etc. For this they can count on liberals, doves, the UN, the Communist bloc, and the 21 Arab states to help cut Israel's moral jugular. The PLO is a client of the USSR, and an ally of the Sandinistas and just about every other anti-U.S. force. It must not be allowed to establish a base to subvert not only Israel, but Jordan. How long do you think the Saudis will last if this Soviet client prevails? It is almost humorous when *NR* contends that the U.S. would never let Israel go under. Ask the Vietnamese or the Contras about firm commitments.

*Marvin Maurer
Professor of Political Science
Monmouth College
West Long Branch, N.J.*

Questions on Illegitimacy

I found Nicholas Eberstadt's thesis arresting ["Is Illegitimacy a Public-Health Hazard?" Dec. 30], but I wonder if it would be supported or undermined by a fuller picture. Namely, if the deaths of children yet unborn are included, does there continue to be the positive correlation he found between infant mortality and illegitimacy, and the lack of correlation between infant mortality and poverty? That is, do single mothers have a greater proportion of miscarriages? Of abortions?

*Rev. Victor L. Austin
Wappingers Falls, N.Y.*

Can 'Em All

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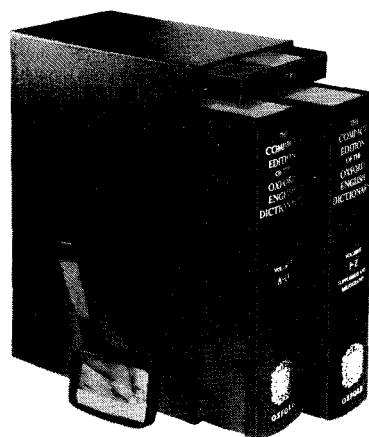
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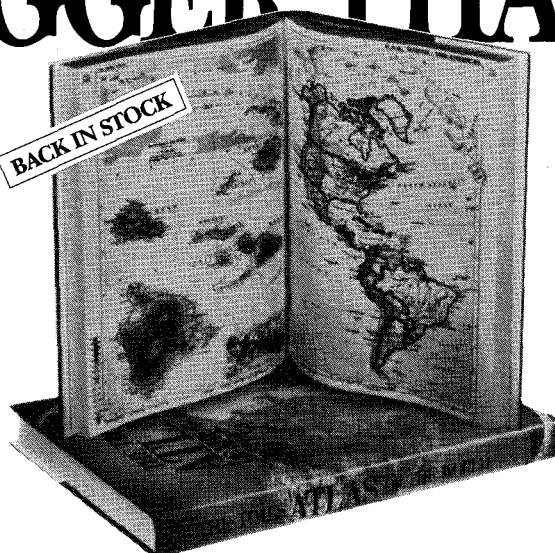
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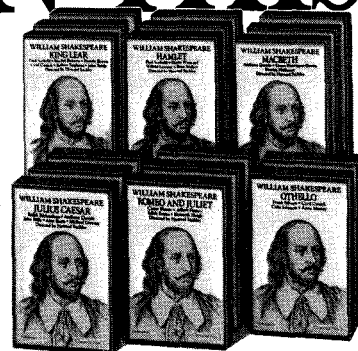
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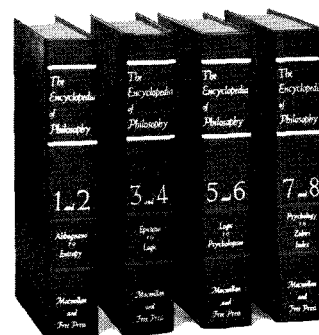
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the mismanagement ["FSLIC Fizzles," "The Week," Jan. 27]?

You rightly point out that the FSLIC mess resulted from imprudent actions by the executives of the failed thrifts. You don't point out, however, that the political contributions of those executives and their industry PACs gave them the congressional license for such imprudence.

Too often the news articles about the disposition of failed S&Ls carry the words "most of the existing management will be retained." I believe that there would be few recurrences of the current mess if FSLIC were to decree that *no one* who had been an executive of a failed institution during the three-year period preceding the failure could be employed as an executive in any other FSLIC- or FDIC-insured institution.

John A. Alexander
Wyckoff, N.J.

Sleuthing the Pacific

I suppose a case could be made for the proposition that even the most obscure places on earth deserve to have their names spelled correctly, and in that spirit I somewhat sheepishly bring to your attention a teeny mistake in the map of the Pacific that accompanied Brian Cro-

zier's article ["The Unpacified Pacific," Jan. 27]. The island group smack dab in the center is not "Wallis and Futura" but "Wallis and Futuna."

So what, you say? Well, elsewhere in that same issue Mr. Rusher makes clear that he did not appreciate being listed as "William Pusher" in the pages of the *New York Times*. Anyway, who knows? The way things seem to be going in the Pacific, today's obscure atoll could be tomorrow's Soviet base.

Harriet Josefowicz
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Twain's Lies?

We were gratified by Charles Nicol's praise of *Mark Twain's Letters* [July 22], the first of a multi-volume edition funded chiefly by the National Endowment for the Humanities. We must plead innocent, nevertheless, to the typo Mr. Nicol reported—"lines" for "lies"—in Mark Twain's November 1, 1866, letter promoting a Carson City lecture. Since the authorial manuscript of this letter no longer survives, the text published in *Mark Twain's Letters* is based on the earliest known printing, in the *Virginia City Territorial Enterprise* of November 4, 1866. You will see from the enclosed

photocopy that the *Enterprise* text reads: "I . . . shall . . . disgorge a few lines and as much truth as I can pump out without damaging my constitution." As Mr. Nicol perceived, the humor of the remark would have been neater if Mark Twain had written "lies." Possibly he *did* write "lies," only to have his joke spoiled by an *Enterprise* typo. In the absence of any hard evidence of this, however, the reading stands in our text as first printed ("lines"). Mark Twain was not always as neat as we might like, but in editing his works we try never to "improve" him.

Michael B. Frank
Associate Editor
Mark Twain Papers
Berkeley, Calif.

Oops!

In jumping from page 31 to page 59 in Stuart Goldman's article last issue [Feb. 24], we inadvertently omitted two words from the quote. The missing words following "without" are "a shadow."

Also, a line was left out in the left-hand column on page 40. The paragraph following the one ending "to be true" should begin: "But not fair enough for a defense secretary to keep that . . ."

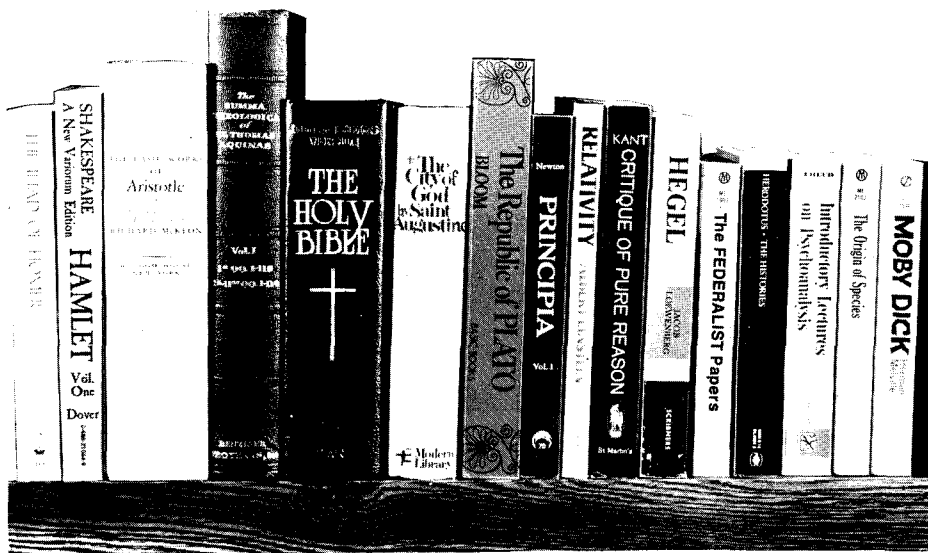
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FOR THE RECORD

Ron Brown's election as chairman of Democratic National Committee means, say **Evans & Novak**, that the Democratic Party is refusing to "woo the departed white male voter at the risk of offending minorities." They point out that no white male even contested chairmanship of two of the three major caucuses and that **Bella Abzug** is expected to chair the third one. . . . Certain longtime Jewish supporters of the Democratic Party privately are voicing concern that Brown may appoint associates tainted with anti-Semitism to positions of influence on the committee. . . . Liberal columnist **Mary McGrory** doesn't like what's going on at the DNC either. McGrory feels that **Jesse Jackson's** continued ascendancy in Democratic Party ranks poses a problem for the party. "Jackson will take Administration perks and plaudits while cracking the whip over his fellow Democrats. It's a dismal prospect, but they know it is too much to hope that he will become a Republican."

Washington Post columnist **David Broder** finds the caving-in by Democratically controlled House and Senate "to the moralistic blackmail of National Nag **Ralph Nader**" on the pay-raise issue a sign of disarray in the party and points out that it was enjoyed by "Republican National Chairman **Lee Atwater** and his former campaign boss **Edward Rollins**, who is soon to take over running the previously ineffectual Republican Congressional Committee." Rollins has signed up former **Jack Kemp** press spokes-

man **John Buckley**. . . . For what it's worth in the very earliest political sounding for 1992, an ABC News/*Washington Post* poll finds **Edward Kennedy** leading the Democratic field with 26 per cent of the vote among Democrats, followed by **Mario Cuomo** with 19 per cent, and **Jesse Jackson** and **Michael Dukakis** tied at 15 per cent. For the record, Kennedy has been the early-bird favorite since time immemorial.

Who did *60 Minutes* hire as consultant for its January 1 creampuff celebration of **Fidel Castro's** thirty years in power? Castro apologist and senior fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, **Saul Landau**. Why did CBS do that. Accuracy in Media's **Reed Irvine** asked *60 Minutes* producer **Don Hewitt**? Because, said Hewitt, that was the only way they could get their camera crews into Cuba. Did *60 Minutes* make this clear on the show? Silly question. . . . *U.S. News* says that **Mikhail Gorbachev** had planned, on his aborted visit to Havana last fall, to announce a cessation of arms aid to Nicaragua and to suggest a UN peacekeeping force to prevent the slipping of arms from Nicaragua to El Salvador guerrillas. . . . Relations between Gorbachev and Castro are at low ebb. Cuban sources report that video of a Castro diatribe against Gorbachev's policies is circulating in Havana. According to this story, Castro called in top aides in November—before the scheduled Gorbachev visit—and declared that Cuba was "the last bastion of true Marxism," and that *Moscow News*, in the era of *glasnost*, is more counter-revolutionary than Radio Martí. . . . Back home in Russia, a poll of Muscovites indicates 61 per cent think Gorbachev will succeed in his plans for political and economic reform (15 per cent think he will fail). Interestingly, older people were more optimistic that Gorbachev

would succeed than younger people. Poll also showed 74 per cent of those questioned no longer fear attack by the United States. . . . Ominous note for *glasnost*. A recent speech by former KGB boss **Viktor Chebrikov** attacking "antisocialist elements" was followed a day later by criticism in *Socialist Industry* of four leading dissidents, all of them former political prisoners: **Lev Timofeyev**, editor of *Referendum*; **Sergei Grigoryants**, editor of *Glasnost*; **Valerei Senderov**; and exiled Armenian activist **Paruir Airikyan**. All were accused of being "antistate and anti-socialist." . . . Thirty-four years later, a Soviet journal, *Foreign Literature*, will bring out **Vladimir Nabokov's** *Lolita*.

Gleanings from latest Americans for Democratic Action senatorial ratings for 100th Congress. Two Democrats got perfect (100) scores: **Patrick Leahy** (Vt.), and **Claiborne Pell** (R.I.). Pell is chairman of Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Six other Democrats scored 95: **Cranston** (Calif.), **Harkin** (Iowa), **Mikulski** (Md.), **Kennedy** (Mass.), **Wirth** (Colo.), and **Mitchell** (Me.). Mitchell is Majority Leader. . . . Up in liberal stratosphere with Democrats was former Connecticut GOP Sen. **Lowell Weicker** (BuckPac Kills!) tied with Rhode Island's **John Chafee** at 90. . . . Republicans who scored five or less were: **Armstrong** (Colo.), **McClure** and **Symms** (Idaho), **Quayle** (Ind.), **Grassley** (Iowa), **McConnell** (Ky.), **Cochran** (Miss.), **Bond** (Mo.), **Karnes** (Neb.), **Hecht** (Nev.), **Helms** (N.C.), **Nickles** (Okla.), **Thurmond** (S.C.), **Pressler** (S.D.), **Gramm** (Tex.), **Garn** and **Hatch** (Utah), **Trible** and **Warner** (Va.), and **Simpson** (Wyo.). That's less heartening than it looks. Karnes and Hecht lost in November, and Tribble retired. Quayle is Vice President and can exercise a vote only to break a tie, and just last week Bill Armstrong announced he would not run for a third term.

Memo from **Richard Nixon** to **George Bush** on how to handle the press (from *TV Guide*): "The media don't have to be convinced. They have to be outfoxed, outflanked, and outperformed. Unless the President finds a way to use them to pursue his own agenda, they will use his failures to pursue theirs."



THE WEEK

□ When Samuel Johnson called patriotism the last refuge of a scoundrel, he hadn't heard of Jim Wright.

□ We had no idea the Ayatollah was into literary criticism. Now we find out he's a deconstructionist.

□ A spokesman for the Ayatollah stressed, however, that the order was in no way intended as a reflection on Mr. Rushdie's prose style or as an endorsement of prior restraint.

□ The five Central American democracies have agreed to finish off the Contras, ever so gently, in return for a new set of Sandinista promises to do what the Contras are fighting to force them to do: namely, keep their 1979 promises to hold free elections. Under the new accords, the Contra camps in Honduras are to be dismantled within ninety days, the soldiers "voluntarily" repatriated, and the elections to occur next year, *after* the dissolution of the resistance forces. The Contras, of course, were not included in the negotiations and have not agreed to their own liquidation. Whether they will acquiesce in the new arrangements is anyone's guess (see Elliott Abrams, p. 30). Once again the democracies have put the democratic forces at the mercy of Communists in exchange for unenforceable pledges of democracy. History repeats itself, especially Yalta.

□ Enlightened opinion this week is gravely concerned about David Duke, a former Klansman who is seeking a seat in the Louisiana legislature, which he will no doubt use as a base for world conquest. Meanwhile, enlightened opinion continues to take in stride the fact that two veteran Democrats who almost never deviate from the Communist line, George Crockett of Detroit and Ron Dellums of Berkeley, hold key seats on congressional committees dealing with the U.S. armed forces and Western hemispheric affairs.

□ CARE AND FEEDING OF CONGRESS, II. The budget for congressional operations has come in at \$2.2 billion, way up from the last budget cycle. The biggest increase comes from processing franked mail (you read all those newsletters, don't you?)—up 200 million pieces since 1986, the last election year. George White, architect of the Capitol, has designed a "mini-indus-

trial complex" for southeast Washington to get the stuff out. Other increases: staff salaries, up 4 per cent (the members might take a lesson from this); a bug-proof hearing room; and funds to restore the 120-year-old statue of Freedom atop the Capitol dome, which, the architect says, is in "very bad" shape, and no wonder.

□ Perhaps the Left's greatest victory is defining "McCarthyism" as society's greatest offense. . . . But wait, a soon-to-be-published book by Carl Bernstein about his days growing up as the son of Communist Party members Alfred and Sylvia Bernstein may lead to qualification of the anathemas. At one point the focus of the book, *Loyalties* (Simon & Schuster), is Bernstein Sr.'s efforts to persuade Bernstein Jr. not to write the book, by arguing that the CP then had no intention of subverting U.S. interests. Bernstein quotes his father: "You're going to prove McCarthy right, because all he was saying was that the system was loaded with Communists. And he was right. . . . Because the whole fight against him was that people weren't Communists." But if Alger Hiss came out and finally admitted to being a Soviet spy, wouldn't they find some way to keep thinking of him as a martyr and victim?

□ The moonbeam is back. The space cadet is landing, and there's hope yet for Rose Bird. Former Governor Jerry Brown has been elected chairman of the California Democratic Party. This coincides with the retirement of Governor George Deukmejian and the expected run for the governorship by Republican Senator Pete Wilson, the aging of Democratic Senator Alan Cranston, and political musical chairs. Brown seems to be just what the Democratic Party needs. He promised to be "the media dark hole that absorbs all of the negative feedback" and averred that he had "recaptured my faith" by watching pre-Columbian rituals in Mexico. But, not to worry. The Democrats now have a spokesman who thinks abortion is "crazy."

□ You can sense it behind the next mountain in Afghanistan, inexorable, approaching. Not the *muja-hedin* army, but the word "bloodbath," which will be used to describe the aftermath of its victory. In fact, it

LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

OVER THE LAST few years, the House of Representatives has not been a healthy place for Jeffersonian Democrats and other living creatures. The Menace of the House, Jim Wright, has used his position as Speaker to bludgeon the parliamentary rights of members of the minority party. His tenure and the tenure of his appropriately titled Majority Whip, Democratic Pit Bull Terrier Tony Coelho, have brought partisanship in the House to an apogee, and have ritualized the sort of political legerdemain befitting a Third World hamlet.

All of which offers George Bush a delicious opportunity to become the House-wrecker Ronald Reagan never was.

Allow us to explain. These days, Menace Wright is in real trouble. His problems now reach beyond the fact that the House Ethics Committee is probing his personal finances, and may launch a second formal inquiry into allegations that he leaked classified information about Central Intelligence Agency activities in Nicaragua. Democrats rallied around him last year when those matters first came up, partly as a way of celebrating the demise of the Reagan era, partly out of admiration for the legislative accomplishments the 100th Congress was able to tote up under his lead-handed leadership.

No, Wright is in trouble because his political capriciousness has finally hit

his colleagues where they can really feel it—in their wallets.

The pay-raise debacle has been so thoroughly documented in the press that we won't bother to recapitulate it here. But Wright's unilateral decision privately to poll members on whether they believed their salaries ought to be raised, and his subsequent decision to hold a vote on the raise when, inevitably, most of them expressed opposition to the salary increase, has angered many House Democrats.

No one says that the Menace's speakership has been immediately endangered as a result, but the incident has left many Democrats longing for more statesmanlike leadership under the respected Majority Leader, Tom Foley. A number of Democrats have compared—unfavorably—Wright's behavior to that of his predecessor, Tip O'Neill, under similar circumstances in 1977. These Democrats speculate that Wright caved in on the pay-raise issue out of fear of further sullyng an image already tarnished by the on-going Ethics Committee investigation.

But in so caving, Wright forgot the first rule of politics: remember who your supporters are. Had Wright simply permitted the recommendations of the pay-raise commission to go through, he might have been tarred and feathered by the editorial writers around the country, but he would have earned the House's undying, if clandestine, gratitude. The irony, of course, is that Wright's actions have further tarnished his image, not only among editorial writers, but among House members whose support he desperately needs.

All of which means that Wright may

well be finished as Speaker. If the Ethics Committee falls short of exonerating him completely, Wright may find himself with precious few defenders, particularly among the younger members who have not yet learned to fear him. In the meantime, they will not be expected to fall in lockstep behind their Speaker the way they might have just a year ago.

Herein lies Bush's opportunity. Call it the good cop/bad cop routine. Bush has extended the oak leaf to the Reagan Administration's enemies on the Hill; he looks like a statesman. Many conservatives (some within the Bush Administration itself) were horn-swaggled by Bush's State-of-the-Union rhetoric, but Democrats gobbled it up. Wright has been trying, in his own fashion, to reciprocate, but his misadventures on the pay-raise issue have resurrected all the old complaints about his style of leadership and left him looking like a less-than-competent nebbish.

The political dynamic is interesting, indeed. Democrats feel disaffected from their leadership and the veneer of solidarity has been stripped from the House Democratic legislative juggernaut. Meanwhile, a new Republican President reaches out for the support of the very Democrats who thwarted the plans of his predecessor.

Republicans look longingly back on the early days of the Reagan era, when Republicans and conservative Democrats put together winning coalitions that effectively handed them control of the House. If President Bush picks his battles carefully—and soon—he could find himself in a similarly enviable situation. —CATO

arrived some time ago, as the press ran stories in the anticipatory mode—worries of bloodbath, concern over coming bloodbath, etc., etc. Lost in the prattle was the bloodbath of the first half of February, as the Soviets gave a last pasting to the Afghan villages that lined their route of retreat. But then, it was easily lost, for it blended seamlessly with the last ten years of Communist and Soviet rule. Their legacy—a million dead civilians, a ruined countryside, a shattered social fabric—does not, be it noted, provide ideal conditions for a reign of sweetness and light. What blood-and-water metaphor describes that period? The deluge?

□ Michael Manley's resounding victory in the Jamaican elections last week is bad news. He threw out the pro-U.S. government of Edward Seaga, which had

labored mightily over the past eight years to bring Jamaica's economy back from the shambles of the prior Manley regime. In the Seventies Manley was a socialist revolutionary much smitten by Fidel Castro's nostrums and given to violent anti-American rhetoric. By the time he was voted out of office in 1980, Jamaica was an economic basket case, its credit and its tourist industry shot. Seaga—a dry-as-bones politician—deserved better of his people. Still, the situation could be worse. Today's Manley dresses in three-piece suits, talks responsibly about paying Jamaica's debts and encouraging foreign investment. He no longer desires to demolish capitalism "brick by brick." Could it be that Michael Manley has learned the lesson of Grenada?

□ A stock market, free political parties—the Hungar-

ian government is coming up with the most amazing ideas these days. A cloud passed briefly over this rising sun when Karoly Grosz, Communist chief, and Imre Pozsgay, a Politburo member, clashed over the aborted revolution of 1956. Was it a "counterrevolution," as Grosz still prefers to call it, or a "popular revolt" (Pozsgay's choice, and of course the truth)? In the end, the two agreed to disagree, which probably means, to fight another day. The issue is not small. Hungary is where it is now because Communism was brutally reimposed upon it 32 years ago. Today's leaders, however restive, are the heirs of yesterday's tyrants. The transition to something better will require much official rethinking. We wish them well, some of them.

□ "Why is the United States afraid of Cicciolina's breasts?" asked that celebrated Italian legislator and porn star, baring them in public, again, to draw attention to her failure to get a visa to perform in San Francisco. We like to maintain our illusions about politicians, that's why. Next question.

□ A Chicago marketing company offers a solution to "sexist" third-person pronouns. It coins "ala" for he or she, "alum" for him or her, and "alis" for his or her. But which towel do you use, alis or alis? We'll stick with oldspeak. Him good.

□ A researcher studying genetic material concludes that the human capacity for speech may be traced to a mutant woman, naturally dubbed Eve, living in Africa 200,000 years ago. We are all alum descendants, the theory goes, for speakers went on to displace the presumed grunTERS and pointers in Europe and Asia, develop political oratory, invent telephones, and generally show their heels to the pre-mutants. The theory explains a lot, but we'll wait to get Adam's side of it, if he can get a word in edgewise.

□ Ted Kennedy was given an award two weeks ago by, of all groups, Mothers against Drunk Driving. Maybe he's decided to take the bus from now on.

Missing Mandate

THE AIR is still scented with the odor of burnt rubber, left by the U-turn Congress made after the popular reaction to its plan to raise its own and other Federal Government salaries became manifest. The incident has been treated as a discrete episode: a barbaric yawp, before which Congress retreated guiltily or cravenly. It was grotesque, almost comic. It also won't happen again. Business as usual, in this view, resumes immediately.

No doubt it will. But the pay-raise dust-up tells us

Question for Mr. Baker

If Gorbachev is really broke
And sports a wad too slim to choke
An undernourished Pekinese,
How come, blue in his BVDs,
He shovels rubles to Fidel,
Ortega, and their clientele?

W. H. VON DREELE

some important things about the way Washington's business is usually conducted. For starters, it underlines, once again, the distinction between public opinion and popular sentiment. Popular sentiment is what everyone thinks. Public opinion is what everyone thinks he ought to think. Public opinion was firmly on the side of the pay raise. A bipartisan commission came up with the idea. Lloyd Cutler, that generic Establishment worthy, proffered it to Congress. The enlightened press editorialized for it. The only people who didn't like it were the owners of all those tea bags.

Congress, interestingly, found itself on the unpopular side of this divide. Congressmen, after all—representatives even more than senators—are supposed to arise from communities, and be in touch with their opinions. "Communion of interests and sympathy of sentiments," was how Madison put it. Think again, James. This crowd is as in touch as the inventors of New Coke.

What then becomes of that congressional mandate of which we have heard so much? That counter-government, run by George Mitchell and Jim Wright, which will humanize the Bush Administration, and to which, if he is a prudent man, he will defer? If a mandate is conferred by vibrating to the general will, then on the evidence no congressional mandate exists. Anybody's opinion of what the people think is as good as these guys'.

A representative system does not run on such principles. Mandates arise when opposing candidates disagree on an issue or a program, and their disagreement is central to the fight between them. In this sense, George Bush might be said to have a mandate not to raise taxes. Congress as a whole has no mandate for anything, especially not this Congress. The Democratic House and Senate candidates proposed no plan for the country, gave no statement of their intentions ahead of time. The closest thing to a Democratic Party agenda, the platform passed in Atlanta, was praised—by its drafters—for its evasiveness.

Even where mandates exist, of course, they can be modified by struggle—by politics. Elections settle, for two-year stretches, the players. They do not inalterably fix the terms of debate: The Democrats and their

cheerleaders in the press, knowing this, will be trying to nudge the Bush Administration in their direction: more taxes, more spending, no SDI, Central American Munichs. George Bush should be heartened in his resistance. The emperors are naked.

Anyone for Ethics?

AT TIMES George Bush seems to be under the impression that he won the Presidency in a landslide victory not over Michael Dukakis but over Ronald Reagan. His early stress on "ethics" as a theme of his Administration is universally understood as a subtle repudiation of the "sleaze" of the Reagan era.

It is true that some of Reagan's people were pretty easy-going about certain proprieties, appearances, and even legal technicalities. But it's also true that "ethics" is a word whose definition in Washington tends to be both surrealistic and kaleidoscopic. Bush is learning this the hard way. Three top members of his team are already under fire for putative ethics violations, including his chief ethics advisor, C. Boyden Gray. Gray has been unfairly pilloried for his perfectly legal position as head of a private company while he served as Bush's informal ethics advisor. Unless it's a conflict of interest for a President to have friends gainfully employed somewhere, it's hard to see the problem. James Baker's stock holdings in banks that have huge outstanding loans in Third World countries are more problematic: there is at least some tension between Baker's interests and the country's. Meanwhile, John Tower is under fire on charges that almost defy tabulation, not to mention definition.

Now John Tower is not a man mothers encourage their little boys to grow up to be like, excepting of course those mothers who see their little

boys as the future hope of the military-industrial complex. That being said, it should be stipulated that not even John Tower should have to face a new charge before breakfast every day. The allegations made against him cover a range of offenses that would, if consistently punished, make Washington a ghost town. His ordeal is, as many have noted, too much like Robert Bork's (with the difference that Bork was transparently innocent of everything he was accused of). Few of Tower's putative vices are relevant to the job. Only Paul Gigot of the *Wall Street Journal* has had the presence of mind to tally up the special interests of Tower's critics.

Then again, Bush has brought this on his own people. As Jimmy Carter learned early, advertising your own scrupulosity in Washington is leading with your chin. Ethics is a legitimate concern, but it's not an agenda.

Media Campaigns in the Courts

THE CHRISTIC INSTITUTE, a hot new player on the Washington scene among the Maryknoll set, describes itself as an "interfaith institute for law and public policy," and aims to influence developments in the capital through elaborate media campaigns disguised as lawsuits. After a handful of notable successes in the Karen Silkwood case (an anti-nuclear-power effort), several El Salvadoran sanctuary suits and an action against the city of Greensboro, North Carolina, for killings resulting from a KKK-Communist shootout, the Christics have finally come a cropper.

In Miami, a federal judge recently awarded nearly \$1 million in attorneys' fees to 29 defendants who had been sued by the Christics alleging participation in a 25-year conspiracy to engage in unlawful, covert, anti-Communist activities around the world. Among the newly enriched individuals are Major General John Singlaub, Iran-Contra figures Albert Hakim and Major General Richard Secord, former CIA official Theodore Shackley, and Nicaraguan Contra leader Adolfo Calero. While claiming connections between this "secret team" and past U.S. misdeeds in Vietnam and Cuba, the gravamen of the Christic suit related to a byzantine web of covert activities, designed to channel financial and military aid to the Contras.

The news here is not that the Institute failed to prove its case—its allegations were viewed as a bit feverish even by many of its sympathizers on the left—but that the group was ordered to pay the defendants' costs. If the Institute does not come up with the money by early next month, the defendants will be authorized to seize its assets (certainly John Singlaub can always use another peace quilt). This is noteworthy in view of the traditional "American rule" that prevailing civil litigants are not entitled to collect

Early Premonitions

Movement conservatives, like owls, whose eyes
Can spot a feeding mouse on moonless nights,
Are feeling their collective gorges rise
As, on a White House wall a finger writes,
"Remember Rockefeller"—which incites
The way a matador inflames the bull:
Indeed, there is no name that so unites
The boys in black tie and the girls in tulle.
Will Mr. Bush attempt to pull the wool,
Or will he, sensibly, pull toward the Right?
In Rocky's case, he sacrificed his pull,
Then faded like the Cheshire cat from sight.
It's also useful recollecting Carter,
Who, like tin Lizzies, wasn't a self-starter.

W. H. VON DREELE

attorneys' fees; this contrasts with the "English rule" which routinely allows such recovery.

The need to reconsider the traditional rule in this country is well illustrated by the Christic suit. The objective here was not to develop any fine legal point at trial or to present a coherent argument of wrongdoing on the basis of the evidence; rather, it was to promote a political agenda with the media's help and, not incidentally, to enhance the Institute's fundraising capabilities. The federal judicial system was simply the most convenient and cost-effective forum for achieving this.

Obviously, this equation is sharply altered if the risk of paying the other party's attorneys' fees has to be calculated. The traditional exception from the "American rule"—arising in cases where the losing party has acted in "bad faith"—has proven an exceptionally high standard to overcome. The modification in 1983, however, of federal court rules has supplied winning parties with new ammunition for collecting fees in the context of suits that are not "well grounded" or that are initiated for any "improper purpose, such as to harass." The Florida judge found this new standard to be satisfied by the Christic suit, which he concluded was "based on unsubstantiated rumor and speculation from unidentified sources with no first-hand knowledge."

While reform of federal attorneys' fees policy represents only the tip of the iceberg of what needs to be done to rationalize our legal system, it would nevertheless be an important first step. The notion that incentives (and disincentives) matter may be equally important in our legal system as in our economic system.

Quick Fix for the Long Run

TREASURY SECRETARY Nicholas Brady seems obsessed with getting businessmen and investors to take a long-term view. A Treasury task force has reportedly been worrying about such things as whether stock options encourage executives to drive stock prices up by doing something to boost short-term profits at the expense of long-term success. Or perhaps pension-fund managers feel they have to sell stock to takeover artists, simply because that is profitable. This whole approach looks like a dead end, at best. Sophisticated investors will not bid the price of a stock up if the company is jeopardizing its longer-term future, and pension funds surely ought to sell to the highest bidder in order to maximize the funds available to pay pensions.

Aside from some embarrassing leaks about half-baked schemes to bail out the thrifts, the Treasury Department's impatience, and eagerness to tinker with markets, has been fairly harmless so far. The reworked version of President Bush's proposed 15 per cent cap-

ital-gains tax, however, was a significant disappointment. Eventually, investors would have to hold stocks for three full years in order to qualify for the 15 per cent tax. That would indeed make people reluctant to sell stock very often, or even to buy in the first place. With such a strong incentive to refrain from selling stock, even when funds should instead be moved to promising new firms, the stock market would tend to become rather "illiquid." That is, it would be harder to get buyers and sellers together on any given day. With people holding stock for three years, or not at all, tax revenues would dwindle after 1994. Instead of hitting a long drive, this is a bad putt. It is not in the economy's long-term interest to discourage people from selling stock and reinvesting the money in better prospects. Businessmen and investors will take an appropriately long-term view just as soon as politicians and government officials do.

Coming to Terms with the Past

THE EXTENT of the long-drawn-out Stalin terror is now at last being fully and irrefutably demonstrated. The key question remains, how many suffered?

The Soviet press has lately—so far in a piecemeal fashion—been giving figures for those killed, imprisoned, and deported in Stalin's time which match those long since deduced in the West, but denied in Moscow and often rejected as excessive or incredible by some in the West as well. In a book published twenty years ago, I was able, by the careful handling of a variety of sources, to reach a rough total of twenty million deaths—with the proviso that this might be an underestimate by as much as 50 per cent.

There is now talk in Moscow of high-placed, official demographers and statisticians having used unpublished material to produce a set of figures for terror deaths in the same range. They hope to be able to publish these in the fairly near future.

In Stalin's time, little of this was fully known abroad. It was even possible to distort the facts of the terror famine of 1932-33, which took place over a huge area penetrated by many foreigners. As to the mass executions, and the even larger numbers sent to—and dying in—the forced-labor camps, they were kept even more secret. The official line was that Stalin killed very few people, and sent only a small number of others to humanely run "corrective labor camps." Some truth came out officially in Khrushchev's time—but no figures; and for two decades thereafter nothing or less ("less" being, for example, the *de-rehabilitation* of some rehabilitated under Khrushchev).

The scent had been confused by the Soviet census of the period. The results of a census taken in January 1937 were suppressed and members of the Census Board were shot as "a serpent's nest of traitors in the

apparatus of Soviet statistics," who had "exerted themselves to diminish the numbers of the population of the USSR." A new census was taken in 1939. It naturally failed to carry much conviction—but it has even now been used as authentic by some Western "scholars." Soviet statisticians have, indeed, lately rebuked them, explaining that there were two reasons for rejecting the figures: first, that Stalin had announced them before the Census Board had examined the data; second, that deaths in prison or labor camps had not been included. Such were the problems, or some of them, that bedeviled the research.

Reasonably accurate estimates of the numbers sent to the labor camps have been available for forty years at least. But they were based on evidence that, though varied and cumulative, came from defectors, escapees, Poles, and others ill-affected to the regime: so they were rejected. They still are, by a few Western (mostly American) academics. This year, Soviet accounts by the dozen confirm them.

A Moscow scholar prominent in the field estimates 15 million peasants were deported to the Arctic in 1930–32, two million of the able-bodied males among them to the forced-labor camps. (My deportation estimate in *The Harvest of Sorrow*, 1986, was ten to 12 million.) At least a third of them are believed to have perished. Then Moscow has published the figure of six million dead (I made it around seven million) for the terror famine of 1933, now referred to bluntly as a "murder-famine," "artificial," and "consciously" planned. Figures indicating seven to eight million arrests in 1937–38 have also appeared; 17 million in the labor camps over the whole period have been put forward; 16 million post-Stalin rehabilitations have been mentioned publicly. And at least a million executions for 1937–38 (not counting executions inside camps) have been given—the same figure as my own,

reached in 1968. But it now looks, from other Soviet evidence, that this may be an underestimate.

For the Kuropaty NRVD execution site has been discovered outside the Byelorussian capital, Minsk. The Soviet estimate of the bodies in mass graves in the area already examined was 102,000; but the chief investigator has just published an estimate of 250,000 to 300,000 for the whole site. And this for the capital of a minor Soviet republic—with five other sites around it still awaiting investigation, and others near the Byelorussian provincial capitals! Even allowing for the fact that these executions include, after 1939, many from the newly annexed Western Byelorussia, the numbers imply a slaughter on a rather larger scale than any of us imagined. But there are still men in Western "Sovietological" posts writing books, misleading students, even writing Op-Ed pages in the *New York Times*, who have claimed, and continue to claim, that Stalin only killed a few thousand, or a few ten thousand: numbers that would fit into a single corner of the single Kuropaty mass gravesite. As for total victims of the whole Stalin period, Soviet assessments in the last few months are giving a figure of twenty million killed and at least as many imprisoned and deported.

The Russian poet and Nobel Prize winner, Joseph Brodsky, has written that Westerners simply cannot face the idea of a regime (a "socialist" one too) that killed tens of millions of innocents, so they turn their indignation against the "mustachioed colonels" and other comprehensible targets. In fact, the main reason Westerners—including alleged experts—failed to understand the Soviet phenomenon was that they could not believe Stalin's acts were possible. That is to say they made unconscious or conscious assumptions that did not admit certain types of reality. Their minds were, in fact, irremediably parochial. As Orwell said, it took an effort of the imagination as well as of the intellect to grasp Stalinism.

It does indeed require such an effort to understand the enormity of the blow to the consciousness of the Soviet peoples, the hideous effect of the vast slaughter, of year after year of fear, of forced falsification, of denunciation and treachery. For when we register the millions of dead, we must also recall that even larger numbers underwent various phases of the terror and just survived. One Soviet article, in a government organ, has already stated that in the terror against the peasantry, in 1930–33, 25 million people were "dead or half-alive" and that "no fewer" suffered in the post-1937 phases. Another tells us that even for the "few" who did



"I think the new era of bipartisanship is coming to a close."

We Are Rich Enough to be Strong

IN REVOKING the 2 per cent rise in national defense budget authority proposed in Reagan's last budget, the Bush budget ensures the largest real decline in defense spending since the early 1970s:

NATIONAL DEFENSE SPENDING 1985-1991 (in billions of 1982 dollars)			
	Budget Authority	Outlays	Outlays as Percentage of GNP
1985	\$264.6	\$230.0	6.4
1988	241.2	252.9	6.1
1989E	237.1	250.0	5.8
1990E			
Reagan	241.1	244.6	5.5
Bush	236.2	242.4	5.5
1991E			
Reagan	244.6	245.6	5.4
Bush	237.1	241.1	5.3

Although budget authority has declined each year since 1985, national defense outlays managed to increase in real terms until this year, reflecting the momentum of the earlier defense build-up. Conversely, even if the Bush defense cuts are undone immediately, military outlays will continue to fall well into the 1990s because of long lead time between authorizations and outlays.

It's unfortunate that the public debate over defense spending is carried out in the context of the federal

budget, where defense historically represents 25 per cent to 50 per cent of total expenditures, rather than in the context of the overall economy, where defense now accounts for less than 6 per cent of GNP. Last year Americans spent \$3.2 trillion (66 per cent of GNP) on clothes, food, housing, and all other kinds of personal consumption. A 1 per cent reduction—roughly a decline from \$13,000 to \$12,870 in per capita consumption—would free up enough resources to finance a \$32-billion rise in defense spending. This realignment of national priorities need not require higher taxes, but could be achieved by fairly modest reductions in federal transfer programs, which currently underwrite 15 per cent of all private consumption.

In fact, higher defense outlays may themselves generate sufficient economic growth to permit even higher levels of personal consumption than before. During the 1950s and 1960s defense spending accounted for 8 to 14 per cent of GNP, but was more affordable than it is now because the economy was stronger, industrial productivity grew at a steady 3 per cent per year, and the nation ran large trade surpluses in virtually every manufacturing sector relevant to the military. The big surge in defense and space research during this period, as well as the expansion in defense in the early 1980s, was accompanied by strong growth in non-federal, commercially oriented R&D. During the 1970s, when defense and space research was cut back, non-federal R&D also grew more slowly, and productivity growth slowed to 1 per cent annually.

—ED RUBENSTEIN

not have relatives arrested, extreme fear penetrated their whole existence. The effect has not yet worn off.

If we do not fully grasp the Soviet past we cannot understand the Soviet present, and so cannot understand the present-day world. —ROBERT CONQUEST

That New Time Religion

ON SATURDAY, February 11, 1989, something of great moment was done that cannot be undone, or so it would seem. The Reverend Barbara Harris of the Diocese of Massachusetts was ordained a bishop of the Episcopal Church. Many cheered the event as a great stride toward the "full equality" of women in church and society. Others protested it as a "blasphemous fiction" and a fatal blow to hopes for recon-

ciliation between Anglicanism and Rome. The disputes swirling around this development are theological, pastoral, ecumenical, cultural, political, and personal.

Taking the last consideration first leads to all the rest. It is agreed by all sides that a man with Barbara Harris's qualifications would never have been considered for the episcopate. Ordained a priest eight years ago, she has slight pastoral experience, no formal theological education, and indeed no earned degree from any college or seminary. Her experience has been as an activist and publicist for radical causes. This experience, plus her being female and black, is deemed sufficient qualification to elevate her to the episcopate. Nothing could so clearly signal the subordination of the theological, pastoral, and ecumenical to the cultural and political in the Episcopal Church. Those who complain that what happened in Boston has ev-

everything to do with sexual politics and little to do with theology may be missing the point. They fail to appreciate the degree to which sexual politics has become the dominant theology in some of our churches.

With an effort at balance that was almost painful, *Newsweek* recently surveyed the feminist insurgency in several churches. The feminist theologians of "women-church," the article makes clear, are nothing if not candid in declaring their intention to transform historically recognizable Christianity into the maternal cult of the "God/ess." Elizabeth Achtemeier, a dissenting biblical scholar at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, describes the women-church movement as "a new religion." Hers is a conclusion hard to resist. In the face of the feminist juggernaut, even proximate orthodoxy is a posture of dissent and defiance in many American seminaries, both Protestant and Roman Catholic.

After 1976, when Episcopalians decided to ordain women, a woman bishop was mainly a matter of time. To question whether Barbara Harris is really or rightly a bishop is, inescapably, to question whether she was really or rightly a priest. About that, Christians are in disagreement, and many have yet to make up their minds. There is no doubt, however, that the fact and the manner of her elevation to the episcopate mark a new stage in the feminization and feministization of American religion. The long march through the institutions proceeds apace.

Richmond Crinkley, RIP

THE OBITUARY notices confined themselves to Richmond Crinkley the man of the theater, and this is not surprising given that he was for five years the executive director, however controversial, of the Vivian Beaumont Theater, a rather disheveled part of the Lincoln Center complex in New York. He came in riding high having co-produced *The Elephant Man*, which was a great hit, commercial and artistic. What then happened is of no particular interest to readers disinclined to follow theatrical controversies based on factional disputes in New York. Suffice to say that the Establishment prevailed by stuffing the board, electing former mayor of New York John V. Lindsay as chairman, ousting Crinkley, who went on to establish a theatrical production company (Cerberus Enterprises Inc.) and to continue to serve as trustee of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and as a member of the advisory board of the National Society of Arts and Letters, Washington Chapter.

It was not known about Richmond Crinkley (1940-1989), Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Virginia, and Fulbright Fellow at Oxford from 1965 to 1967, that he was a closet conservative and for more than three years wrote the unsigned CATO col-

As Inflation Stirs

John Sununu's fighting fires;
Mr. Bush is looking tense;
Mr. Tower's at the drier's;
Mr. Nunn is on the fence;
Dr. Sullivan is quiet,
For which blessing, praise the Lord!
Mr. Darman is a riot
Only Mom and Dad adored.

W. H. VON DREELE

umn for the magazine, and the (also unsigned) WINSTON column for the defunct *National Review Bulletin*. In 1971, we acknowledged the distracting pull of the theater on his life, and the special strengths of a competitor for the position, and gently retired Richmond, and appointed George F. Will to fill that slot.

We remained friends, though his political writing all but ended. And when he launched Cerberus, his very first enterprise was to seek the right to dramatize my political novels, a project that never materialized because of a conflicting commitment, by the author, to another potential producer. In 1966, Richmond Crinkley welcomed the editor of *NR* to Oxford (I was looking for young writing talent, found Ferdinand Mount, and brought him to New York for a year), and contrived an invitation for dinner at All Soul's, a memorable venture (though the memory dimmed sometime between the seventh and tenth libation, so ceremoniously served) in pure hedonism. He was a jolly, spirited, enthusiastic companion and brought much life to his (undercover) political writings.

The editors forward their condolence to Richmond's family, and mourn his loss at the early age of 49.

—WFB

NOTES & ASIDES

□ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Advice you proffer in your "Notes & Asides" column is rarely wrong. However, when you do err you do so flagrantly. In advising Mr. S. Trocchia [Dec. 30] to ignore Keith Mano from time to time and implicitly encouraging him to continue in his misguided support of the Mets you have simultaneously encouraged this young man to disregard one of the best observers of the contemporary scene (Mano) and to continue along with an allegiance that is most unsound and probably dangerous to his health (Mets).

Unless you had given him up as a lost soul (Mets Fan, New Jersey), I can think of no possible reason

for the heretical course of action you recommended. Please, say it ain't so. Blame it on the staff, plead temporary insanity; but whatever you do, recant and tell Mr. Trocchia your advice was wrong and upon reconsideration he should resolve to never skip Keith Mano and to switch his allegiance to the Bronx. Anything short of such a retraction and restatement will certainly haunt you in your later days.

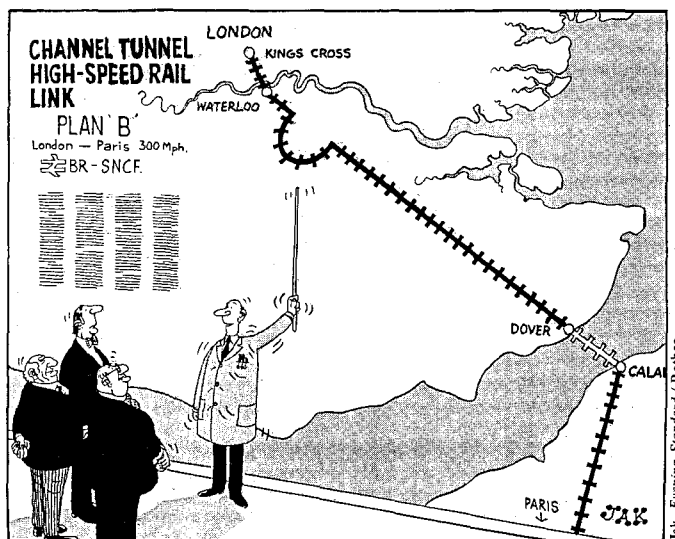
Sincerely,
Randal G. Freeman
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Freeman: It will haunt me that I skipped Mano, but not that I disdained the Mets. I was once a New York Giants fan, but when they left town I closed down my rooting station, which remains locked.
Cordially, WFB

□ Dear Mr. Buckley:

With over 98 per cent of the folks in Congress who run for re-election being returned to office, there must be something wrong with our system. Either these people are better than I give them credit for, or we, as constituents, aren't paying close enough attention to what our elected representatives are doing. Here is a system to remedy the latter. It is fool-proof. For want of a better name, let's call it "Accountability Government," and here is how it works:

1. The General Accounting Office (accountability/accounting—sounds like the right bureau) would estimate the cost to the taxpayers for every bill that passes Congress.
2. The GAO would then prepare a list of the congressmen with the cost of all bills that pass that he has voted "for" in an adjacent column.
3. In another column, the GAO would list the costs of all of the existing programs that the new bills replace.
4. Now watch closely: at the end of each calendar



"Oh! That's where Mrs. Thatcher lives!"

year, the GAO will divide the total cost of new programs that each congressman helped pass, #2 above, by the total cost of existing programs, #3, to give the factor.

The factor is a handy-dandy number related to your representative's fiscal responsibility. Obviously, if he is voting for programs that cost the taxpayer more money each year, his factor will be greater than 1.0; by the same token, if he votes to reduce spending, his factor will be less than 1.0.

That's nice, you say. So what? Under this new system, when figuring your income tax, you will be required to multiply your calculated tax by the factor of *your* congressman in order to arrive at your final, adjusted income tax. How do you like that? If your congressman is one of those big-spenders, you will be, too, when income-tax time comes rolling around.

Sincerely,
H. W. Kacy Jr.
Otis, Ore.

Dear Mr. Kacy: I like that just *fine*. Let's go with it!
Cordially, WFB

□ Dear Mr. Buckley:

If you define "terrorism" too broadly, as you seem to do in a recent "On the Right" column, then the following also become "terrorists":

Contras in Nicaragua
CIA
George Washington.

Sincerely,
David I. Caplan
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Caplan: Surely not so loosely as to permit *that*. The Contras legitimately think of themselves as the same revolutionaries that fought against Somoza. The CIA does not engage in terrorism, though it has engaged in attempted acts of regicide, which is different. And George Washington was not a terrorist under any definition. Those dead Indians were trying to get him, remember. Cordially,
WFB

□ Memo to: WFB.
From: McF

Bill, *hanc scriptionem vidisti?*

From *Fort Pierce (Fla.) Tribune*, Q & A column by editor, Lee Barnes.

"'Why don't you print William F. Buckley's political columns?'"

"'We have a policy here that we will only use columnists who write in English.'"

McF: *Qualis anus equi!*

Bill

—WFB

CZAR WITHOUT A THRONE?

WASHINGTON IS a bureaucratic zoo. Incoming drug czar William Bennett will soon learn that nothing is less welcome to the menagerie's management than a coordinator. In government, a coordinator is defined as someone accountable for the results of bureaucracies over which he/she has no control.

In the decades since Nixon made the war on drugs a federal priority, Congress has allocated billions to end the scourge. This spending spawned an alphabet soup of acronyms: DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration), NIDA (National Institute on Drug Abuse), INM (Bureau for International Narcotics Matters), ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms). Even the FBI and the NSC have a piece of the pie: the counterterrorism/narcotics staff. There is hardly a seat in the Cabinet that does not have its stake in the drug war.

Bennett's peril is that he is a czar without a throne. Various Cabinet chieftains hold the keys to his empire and, consequently, to his success. He is a de facto Cabinet officer without a Cabinet department.

For a recent analogy, one might look at the late Bill Donovan, the Wall Street lawyer who created America's modern intelligence apparatus. John Ranelagh's book, *The Agency: The Rise and Decline of the CIA*, should be immediate reading for Bennett.

In World War II, Donovan was chosen by FDR to be his intelligence czar—among his duties being to coordinate two key activities encroaching on other bureaucratic turf: intelligence analysis and operations. Like Bennett, he faced a decentralized bureaucracy, scattered throughout such agencies as the FBI, War Department, and State Department, which were headed by hostile appointees, notably the formidable J. Edgar Hoover. Donovan's immediate solution was to create his own bureaucracy, the Office of Strategic

Services (OSS), which he headed and staffed. Donovan quickly discovered that having the President's blessing was only a start. Rival agencies immediately moved in to curtail his influence and to build their own budgets.

Coordination of the U.S. intelligence effort took thirty years to accomplish. Seen thus, it is probably natural that some twenty years after the explosion of the drug problem, Congress has decided it's time to coordinate matters. This may be a new law of bureaucratic life-cycles: problem, piecemeal programs, no progress, centralization.

Bennett comes on the scene at the "no progress" stage. This is his choice: carve out a bureaucracy by moving to gain control of the budgets and personnel of the myriad agencies already involved in the drug war, or settle for the bully pulpit. Although Bennett is effective from the pulpit, he will soon find drug abuse differs from education. There is, after all, no real constituency for educational mediocrity, only differences over means for achieving excellence. Drug abuse is different. Vice has its champions. Like the prohibition of alcohol, the illegal trade in drugs has spawned vast financial empires, corruption, and people willing to pay high prices and risk jail to satisfy their appetite for drugs.

Curbing the appetite and curtailing supply are the two basic approaches. Abuse in this hemisphere is as old as our history, and the prospects of progress—in any swift sense—are dim. Curbing supply, on the other hand, holds promise. But it will require more than an armada around our borders. A national effort to uncover the extent of official corruption here at home is vital. Such efforts will require everyone from investment bankers to prison guards bribed by inmates. Consider this: if we can't keep illegal drugs out of prisons, how and where can we?

On foreign shores, the problem is even tougher. In Panama, we are already familiar with the old dilemma

of when to ignore the corrupt drug-trafficking leaders because their nations are important in geostrategic terms. When, for example, should we put pressure on a producing country—like Turkey—by withholding arms sales? Or Colombia, in the form of trade sanctions or extensions of loans? Does one make the problem worse or better with such measures? In short, when does foreign cooperation on some of our national interests merit a blind eye on a lack of cooperation in helping us handle our drug problem?

How serious, after all, are we about drugs? At a time when it is suggested that college students should lose federal funds for a single drug infraction, should we not also be re-examining the government's threshold regarding the limits of *Realpolitik*?

THESE ARE the issues Bennett must face. Heretofore, our drug war has had many colonels but no general. That has made it easy to duck the difficult questions. No one, after all, was finally and irrevocably in charge. Now Bennett is the Supreme Commander. His political future—not unsubstantial—is also at stake. No one expects him to end the drug plague, but people will look for more than speechmaking. Sermonizing will fast wear thin to those on the front lines. Parents, policemen, urban officials, and the media will see whether or not our drug emperor has any clothes on.

Washington's conventional wisdom says he will head for the bully pulpit. The betting from my corner is that Bennett will size up the matter and follow Donovan's example. But if Bennett chooses to build a throne—another government agency with its inevitable bureaucracy, something conservatives inherently dislike—his greatest accomplishment could be forging the weaponry for a war on drugs that is real. This will entail the bureaucratic battle of a lifetime. □

HONG KONG? JUST WATCH CHINA

WHY DID Union Carbide move its Southeast Asian headquarters from Hong Kong to Singapore? Silly question. Answer: for the same reason that Jardine Matheson (the British conglomerate that used to be virtually synonymous with Hong Kong) moved to Bermuda in 1984. And why did Jardine Matheson, etc? Silly question: for the same reason that 130,000 inhabitants left their homes for the United States, Canada, and Australia from 1986 to 1988.

To be more precise, these moves, and many more on the way, are happening because of a gut feeling that, when the time comes, it will make no sense to entrust the fate of a major center of capitalism to the whims of a Communist government in Peking.

And yet, at the same time, foreign investment has been pouring into the British colony, which is due to come under the sovereignty of the Chinese People's Republic (PRC) when Britain pulls out in 1997. In the year ended last April, Japanese investment alone totaled \$1.1 billion. Yet Japan's share of foreign investment in Hong Kong, at 21 per cent, is just over half the U.S. share, at 41 per cent. In contrast, the British percentage is only 15 and the PRC's a modest 6 per cent.

The above merely hints at the importance of Hong Kong as an economic and financial center, with its stock exchange, its banking services, its container port, and its airport. And yet none of the countries involved in, or dependent on, Hong Kong was consulted when the British government, in the early 1980s, decided it was time to negotiate with the PRC on the "return" of Hong Kong to China. For that matter, the 5.8 million people of Hong Kong (before the exodus began) were not consulted either.

Note the quotation marks. When the British, in the heyday of the empire, grabbed the island in 1841, its economic value was merely potential. True, smugglers and pirates who used

it as a hiding place found it useful, but nobody consulted *them* either. And, to be fair, there were a few farmers and fishermen, eking out a living.

So one might say the Chinese Communists are getting a pretty good deal. The rocky, empty island of the 1840s now looks like Manhattan. When it came to the crunch of 1984, when Margaret Thatcher and Geoffrey Howe signed their agreement in Peking, the British side made no distinction between the actual island (the sovereignty of which had been "ceded" to Britain) and the "suburb" of Kowloon plus the New Territories, both on the mainland (which had been "leased" for 99 years, expiring in 1997).

Let us be fair. Bits of empire can be a problem. But comparisons do intrude. Seven years ago, Britain sent a fleet of one hundred vessels eight thousand miles south to defend two thousand settlers of British stock (and half a million sheep) against Galtieri's invaders. Gibraltar has thirty thousand inhabitants, neither British nor Spanish, and was ceded to England in 1713. But the British have said it, many times: they won't hand over the Rock unless the people of Gibraltar say this is what they want.

Well, of the 5.8 million unconsulted Hong Kongers, some three million have "British" passports for traveling purposes, but cannot live or work in Britain. Worse, of five hundred loyal civil servants in the Colony who applied for UK citizenship, only eight were successful. Worse still: in neighboring Macao, five thousand civil servants, plus thirty thousand ordinary folk, are to get Portuguese citizenship. Even worse: these 35,000 will be able to work in Britain under EC law, but not the three million Hong Kongers.

Faced with such data, Britain's Foreign Secretary, with the Whitehall mandarins solidly behind him, responds that the 1984 deal was the best obtainable. Indeed, on paper, the PRC "guarantees" to preserve the social and

economic system of Hong Kong and the existing human rights.

The question is whether the people of Hong Kong feel they can entrust their future to a regime committed to the destruction of capitalism.

But is it? After all, didn't the Great Helmsman himself call Deng Xiaoping a "capitalist roadster"? And isn't that exactly what Deng has turned out to be since Mao Tse-tung died in 1976?

Yes, up to a point. Deng discovered, years before Gorbachev did, that Leninist "socialism" just doesn't work. But Deng and Gorbachev face the same dilemma: how can they discard the *raison d'être* of their regimes?

Deng's reforms have brought fruit and vegetables into the markets, and he has created islands of capitalism in the ocean of socialism. One result is that inflation, non-existent in the bad old days of universal penury, now runs at 20 per cent.

Deng, however, is 83 and not immortal, and the "line" of the party can change any time. Two years ago, the reforming party boss, Hu Yaobang, was fired for his "bourgeois liberal" policy. His successor, Zhao Ziyang, has been saying there is no question of dropping socialism.

BUT THERE IS no real guarantee. Even now, it is surely not too late to internationalize the issue. Foreign devils with interests in Hong Kong should gather in conference. This would be in Peking's interest as well, for if they want to inherit a going concern, not a barren bit of land, they will have to find out what the wealth-makers need.

One interesting possibility should not be ruled out, however. In China as in Russia, Communism could collapse. In China's case, this could prove Chiang Kai-shek and his heirs right. With another regime in Peking, Taiwan would cease to be a problem, and Hong Kong too. □

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THE WORLD ACCORDING TO MOYERS

TOD LINDBERG

IN 1866, Frederick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux delivered a report about laying out Prospect Park in Brooklyn. The "great advantage which a town finds in a park," they write, "lies in the addition to the health, strength, and morality which comes from it to its people, an advantage which is not only in itself very positive but which as certainly results in an increase of material wealth as good harvests or active commerce." Olmstead's spirit and sense of mission, as Roger Starr has noted, were characteristic of the reformers and moralists of his day. There is direct continuity between his view and the view of those who now make public-television programs.

Public television has its origins in a two-sided critique of its medium. On the one hand television is an immensely powerful medium, capable of reaching and influencing tens of millions of people, an avenue of communication the likes of which the world has never seen before. On the other hand, it is a dangerous medium. In commercial television, the imperative is to reach for the largest possible audience, and the easiest way to do this is to make the appeal at the level of the lowest common denominator. Standards erode rapidly, quality does not sell: and the viewing audience is thereby debased.

By contrast, public-TV producers are not susceptible to the crass commercial motives that result from the need to provide an audience attractive to the advertisers who pay the way. The medium is thus freed of the burden of aiming low, and television is once again (or at last) free to deliver quality equal to its power.

Deliver it to whom? For the makers of public television, the answers vary with the program: *Brideshead Revisited* to people interested in British history and culture, perhaps. *The Story of English* to those curious about the mother tongue. The American Ballet Theatre's *Apollo* to fanciers of dance. But in a sense, the answer is larger, the ground common. The makers of these programs have in mind, first, a broad audience of educated and cultured people; second, the presumably broader audience of those who wish to *become* better educated and more cultured. The latter will be introduced to British history and culture, to the philology of English, to Baryshnikov and Balanchine. They may even begin to cultivate an appreciation of these

things. It is because they sense this potential for uplift out there in the darkened living rooms of America that those who make public-television programs are so fervently evangelistic. Olmstead wanted to make parks available to the people; public television wants to make ideas available.

"Ideas," in the sense employed on public television, are sometimes complicated, but not beyond the reach of anyone's understanding. Ideas, after all, are useful—functional things that people should not ignore simply because they do not have much time. Like fresh air or mixing with the upper orders, ideas are good for people. Public television can deliver these goods, open the doors, provide a passport valid for travel throughout this elevated sphere.

A recent example is *A World of Ideas with Bill Moyers*, a series of 49 half-hour shows first aired on PBS in the fall and now being rebroadcast on a number of stations. Its format is simple: Bill Moyers travels to a home or office in the world of ideas. He interviews its occupant one-on-one, and the edited result, with a short voice-over at the beginning to introduce the subject as he walks along a campus path, perhaps, or meets with students, makes up the half-hour show. In a handful of cases, Moyers grants an extra half-hour. The last episode of the series, called "Summing Up," is a sort of greatest-hits program, an essay Moyers has composed from snippets of preceding shows.

The program's title betrays a master's touch, at once earnestly affirming that ours is, yes, a world of ideas, while at the same time humbly suggesting that the program touches upon a world only, one of many possible worlds (there being, of course, so very many ideas). It is also (though this reading may not have been intended) a world of ideas with Bill Moyers in it: he is the interlocutor and executive editor; he presumably had a large say in picking the subjects, as well as a large measure of control over the editing.

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS have made studies of what the eye looks at when it is presented with different elements on a page, for example, in a newspaper. It would be interesting to know how people really watch television. A dark movie theater is a very different environment; there are only two choices: stay and watch, or get up and leave. Television, by contrast, offers many channels to

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Our Guest Tonight Is Socrates, Himself a Noted Interviewer

Moyers: I think it was Friedrich Nietzsche—or perhaps it was Jack Valenti—who said that your wife, Xanthippe, made things so unbearable for you at home that she indirectly made you into the cleverest “street dialectician” in Athens. And yet you were also admonished that you would “cut a poor figure in the city.” I believe Callicles warned that you would be hauled before a jury—and you wouldn’t know how to defend yourself.

Socrates: Yes, but I always understood that. I said it was one thing for a doctor to address a jury composed of doctors; it was quite another for a doctor to address a jury composed of laymen. When a philosopher addresses a jury, or addresses the “multitude” in politics, it is rather like the doctor addressing the jury of laymen.

Moyers: He cannot speak to them of the things that doctors would understand.

Socrates: Exactly. He must speak the kind of words that can persuade, even though they cannot convey real knowledge. In short, he needs rhetoric, not philosophy.

Moyers: Some would say that you’ve just described the state of American politics from Watergate to Iran-Contra. Would you not say that we have fallen into dark times?

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Socrates: Well, I do not think you have invented any novel form of vice—except, perhaps, for the graduated income tax. Still, there is one new twist: we used to look, in politics, for a gentleman, for one who could understand the philosopher and yet speak to the multitude. But now you no longer even have the political man speaking to the public. You have, in his place, the Interviewer, or worse, the News Anchor, rationing or rephrasing the words of the “public” man.

Moyers: But someone has to bring the news. Is that really so bad?

Socrates: Let me put it this way. You are the most earnest of the species of Interviewers. The measure of the current situation may be found in the modest test of how close, in fact, you come to conveying to your listeners the sense of what I am saying now.

Moyers: You once complained—and I think we have it on tape—you complained of those politicians who have “paid no heed to discipline and justice, but have filled our city with harbors and dockyards and walls and revenues and similar rubbish.” But have you always been reserved in this way about public works?

Socrates: That was not precisely what I had in mind. I was merely comparing certain politicians to servants who mistake feeding for well-being; who gorge and fatten our bodies, but disregard, as I said, “the rules of health.”

Moyers: But wouldn’t you think that political men who grasped those “rules of health,” as you call them, would also be concerned about those 37 million Americans without health insurance?

Socrates: I think I was speaking, rather, of a willingness to understand what is good for us *by nature*, and to choose, “in place of an insatiable and uncontrolled life the life or order that is satisfied with what at any time it possesses.”

Moyers: Yes, but that “program,” if I may call it that, would seem to settle in with a large measure of inequality. And for us, the “idea” of America is the idea of equality.

Socrates: But of course you understand that I am not offering a “program.” I am simply arguing for the proper ordering of our lives and our souls. I am merely staging a gentle incitement, you might say, to the kind of life that not only would be marked as good in this world, but which would be “plainly of benefit also in the other world.”

Moyers: I’m sorry for persisting, but what would that say to the poor and homeless, who are very much anchored in *this* world?

Socrates: It says that they may not really be poor in the measures that finally count. And when they reach the other world, they could be sure at least of this: that it will not be Anaheim. —HADLEY ARKES

choose from, and remote control has made the physical act of “switching” simpler, even seductive. But short of the ultimate sanction—turning the program off—there is a wide range of options, from chatting with someone else in the room, making coffee, glancing at the day’s newspapers, to looking out the window, all readily available.

Talking-heads television, such as *A World of Ideas*, is by common consent the hardest kind of television to make interesting for the viewer. The most successful method has been to introduce conflict, if not shouting—opposing points of view vying for supremacy. *The McLaughlin Group*, while it did not invent the technique, has perfected it. Some think this is a low device, and in any case it is difficult to sustain for long in a face-to-face interview. For whatever reason, Moyers has not made use of it. He is a very polite man on camera.

In the world of ideas, Moyers has principally contributed

the idea of Etiquette. He is one that will do to swell a progress, start a scene or two; a perfect Prufrockian attendant lord. He is:

Deferential (to Carlos Fuentes): “I’ll tell you what’s good about Mexico, as I see it, and then you tell me what you think is good about the United States. When I go there . . . I love the feeling of life. I love the literature. I love . . .”

Glad to be of use (to Barbara Tuchman): “. . . the American people did learn from the Vietnam experience, not to let another President take us into a war unless he can present overwhelming evidence that our national security was clearly at stake. Don’t you find that encouraging?” Tuchman: “Yes, I think we have learned from that . . .”

Politically (to Noam Chomsky): “I mean, I don’t want to leave people with a wholly negative analysis, although I believe in facing reality.”

Cautious (to Joseph Heller): “See, what you’re doing is

assaulting a fundamental premise that's been drilled into us in this country, which I think I still believe, that the individual matters, the individual really counts . . ."

And meticulous (to Henry Steele Commager): "There was a speech by George Washington in which he used the word 'posterity' nine times."

Full of high sentence (to Jessica Tuchman Matthews): "What's going on here? What's happening to this earth, our home?"

But a bit obtuse (to Peter Berger): ". . . reading Peter Berger, one comes to the strong impression that democracy and capitalism are necessary partners, and in Japan to a lesser extent, more so in Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and Korea, those are authoritarian societies." Berger: "No, that does not contradict my view. . . . you need a market economy in order to have a successful democracy. But the only other way around is not correct."

At times, indeed, almost ridiculous (to John Searle): "What you say smacks so strongly of common sense that I wonder what the argument is all about, except that I haven't been black and I haven't been female."

These statements have been taken out of context here, and this has had the effect of making them seem more ludicrous than they are. Set in type, they may be arresting; from the television, they are merely sonorous banalities that deflect any desire to pay attention to the screen. If Polonius actually lived and breathed, he would not come across as actors have played the role—that is, he would not be funny and interesting: he would be Bill Moyers.

For the Hamlets—those who might be sufficient to hold one's attention—we have the guests. When he says of his guests, "I set no agenda, wrote no questionnaires. I wanted to hear what was uppermost on their minds," he means it. To his mind, he has been the exemplar of disinterested inquiry, as near as is given to a man to be disinterested. And this is what his activity has consisted of: "I've been listening to men and women who are thinking, talking, and writing about what's going on in America, in our lives, our hearts, and minds. Someone said once that we get information from books, but real learning must come from exposure to those in whom it lives. 'A human being,' he said, 'is the very embodiment of an idea.' I went looking for such people."

There is a sense in which the notion Moyers expresses is



defensible, roughly along the lines of, "If a book sits on a library shelf unread, what good are the ideas it contains?" But Moyers plainly means more: sitting down and talking with someone for half an hour is a superior method for getting "ideas" than reading the books or articles that person has written. For the benefit of those at home who are not in a position to be "a privileged traveler and a fortunate student," as Moyers describes himself, he will stand instead, a public-television everyman. Here is the world of ideas in which watching Leon Kass for an hour makes it unnecessary to read *Toward a More Natural Science*.

THIS IS A more radical proposition than those in public television—perhaps including Moyers—would really be willing to defend. Even so, as a description of the relation between viewing habits and the life of the mind, it is true for no small part of the audience. The ratings for public television are not high, but more librarians and schoolteachers certainly saw Leon Kass than will ever crack the spine of his collection of essays. The same is true of *Brideshead Revisited*. This is a version of the world of ideas, accessible to those who can manage to keep their attention focused on the screen.

But, as might be expected, the guests are a mixed bag. Some are good, even compelling, and some are not. Clarity and eloquence before the camera (for that matter, in person) are not the gifts of everyone. How well one does on television depends as much on how well one speaks one's piece as on what piece one is speaking.

Where does this leave the public-television notion that a human being is the very embodiment of an idea? Sarah Lightfoot Lawrence, for instance, spoke passionately, but regrettably made the mistake of wearing large, dangling earrings, which bobbed to and fro as she moved her head. The effect was distracting. And it distracted attention from—and interest in—the ideas she presumptively embodied. Max Beerbohm once refused an invitation to dine with Henry James in order to read a just-published Henry James short story. He found the true embodiment of Henry James on the all-too-carefully written page rather than in his idle, dinner-table conversation. That is perhaps an extreme repudiation of the Moyers point of view; but it serves for that very reason to make the point.

That is not to say that some of the programs do not have a certain gossipy, dinner-table interest. Joseph Heller demonstrates that learning is a life-long process in discussing the research he did for *Picture This*, his latest novel, which is set in ancient Athens: "Socrates, I was amused to learn, never wrote a word." Noam Chomsky, by way of illustrating the point that even though American institutions will not tolerate dissent, it is flourishing in unofficial avenues, says, "I mean, I can see it in my own personal life. For example, over the last couple of years the demands on me personally for, say, speaking somewhere have escalated beyond anything imaginable. I have to plan years in advance . . ." (Moyers, nearing the end of his second half-hour installment with Chomsky, probingly asks: "You've dealt in such unpopular truths, and have been such a lonely figure as a consequence of that, do you ever regret either that you took the stand you took, have written the things you've written, or that we had listened to you earlier?")

All this, of course, has precious little to do with the "world of ideas," any world of ideas. To judge it by its own terms, the series has placed a particular emphasis on such themes as the relation of individual Americans to their government and the dangers that come when government betrays the people's trust; the role of science, technology, and medicine in American life; man's place in the world, in the environmental sense; teaching children.

I watched ten installments on videotape and read transcripts of the rest, and thereupon hangs a tale. I got the tapes, as is customary, by calling the person who handles such things. I told him who I was and for whom I was writing, and left the selection of the agreed-upon number of tapes to him. I got Tom Wolfe; Leon Kass (two parts); Peter Drucker; Harvard education professor Sarah Lightfoot Lawrence; Vartan Gregorian, the outgoing head of the New York Library; Peter Berger; John Lukacs; law professor Mary Ann Glendon; and Maxine Singer, a geneticist. The political orientation of these people ranges from conservative to slightly left of center. It is not representative of the series as a whole. I did not receive, for example, Noam Chomsky (two parts), E. L. Doctorow, Joseph Heller, Barbara Tuchman, Sissela Bok, Jessica Tuchman Matthews, Sheldon Wolin, Northrop Frye, Carlos Fuentes, nor, curiously, the "Summing Up" program. For some reason, it seems Moyers's publicity department wanted to keep intact its ample reserve on the far left, and was even willing to significantly deplete its moderate resources and all but exhaust its conservatives to do so.

Moyers, in his "Summing Up" program, says, "It's not hard to figure out what we have to do if we are committed to saving our children's future—to our own posterity. We'd have to treat the environment with reverence, reverse the arms race, reduce inequality, overhaul our schools, and recover a sense of public and private morality." Oh, *that* world of ideas.

That a familiar sort of fuzzy-left political agenda emerges from such a series as *A World of Ideas* should come as no great surprise. John Lukacs, Peter Berger, Leon Kass (among a handful of others) having appeared on some of the program's 49 installments, the fairness doctrine has been complied with, and let the chips fall where they always do.

Moyers's political views date back to his days as an aide to Senator Lyndon B. Johnson. He is widely credited as the prime mover behind the most famous television commercial for Johnson's 1964 presidential campaign: the one in which a little girl picks the petals from a daisy as a voice counts down to a nuclear explosion. In a recent controversy with Senator Goldwater over this, Moyers managed to be simultaneously combative and sententious: "For some of us, Senator Goldwater apparently excepted, life's experiences bring growth and change and even second thoughts about one's early enthusiasms."

Moyers's second thoughts came only two years later, in 1966, when he voted with his feet against Johnson (by now increasingly preoccupied with Vietnam at the expense of the Great Society) and left the Administration for journalism. By the standards of the profession, his career has been distinguished, particularly his documentary work for public television, then for CBS, now for public television again. The title of his 1971 book gives a flavor of his sensibility: *Listening to America: A Traveler Rediscovered His*

Country. This can be an indiscriminate sensibility, leaving one susceptible to all manner of cant—for example, the proposition that some official culture of repression prevents Noam Chomsky from finding outlets for his political views. But, at its best, this sensibility can actually move journalists to report what they see and hear, as in Moyers's acclaimed CBS Reports program, *The Vanishing Family—Crisis in Black America*.

This was a program in which ideas were embodied not in talking heads self-consciously elaborating a theme, but in ordinary people actually living them and their consequences. It was superior to *A World of Ideas* in exactly the same way as *Lear* is superior to a self-conscious play of debate. Alas, the ideas that were so destructively embodied in the lives of Newark's poor, welfare-dependent, and feckless underclass blacks were the very ideas that Moyers had championed so fiercely under Johnson. Which gives a certain poignancy to that "second thoughts about one's early enthusiasms."

DWIGHT MACDONALD, in his 1960 essay "Masscult and Midcult," writes: "If there were a clearly defined cultural elite here, then the masses could have their *Kitsch* and the classes could have their High Culture, with everybody happy. But a significant part of our population is chronically confronted with a choice between looking at [commercial] TV or old masters, between reading Tolstoy or a detective story: i.e., the pattern of their cultural lives is 'open' to the point of being porous. For a lucky few, this choice is stimulating. But for most, it is confusing and leads at best to that middlebrow compromise called Midcult." Midcult, to Macdonald's thinking, is not an elevation of low culture but a corruption of high culture: masquerading as high culture, it encourages people to believe they are getting the real thing.

Macdonald writes that "Midcult has it both ways: It pretends to respect the standards of High Culture while in fact it waters them down and vulgarizes them." This description is accurate as far as the cultural product is concerned, but does not quite do justice to the people who produce it (as Macdonald himself is aware: a footnote to the preceding passage describes the process as "unconscious"). In fact, one of the characteristics of the middlebrow has been a *genuine* respect for high culture, even if this respect was unaccompanied by a genuine taste for it. The problem was not that people failed to believe, in their heart of hearts, that T. S. Eliot was any good: it was that they also believed Archibald MacLeish was good—just as good, and that they only ever had any particular desire to read Archibald MacLeish.

When Bill Moyers talks about ideas, he is talking about people who have them. "A human being is the very embodiment of an idea." This is the end of even a pretense of respect for "the standards of High Culture." It is a stop on the same path where one finds received wisdom, gurus, and cults of personality. It wants to inspire people to sit at Sissela Bok's feet, not to read *Secrets* or *Lying*. Moyers, who preached in Baptist churches as a young man, is once again in the pulpit, this time as an intermediary between the faithful and their secular gods, a public televangelist on a mission of salvation—saving the children, saving the planet, saving viewers from themselves. □

*The 'health-care crisis' is in fact no crisis at all:
Americans are healthier and living longer than ever before.
Major reform will only leave us as badly off as Britain.
All we need is minor surgery and a bit of*

THE RIGHT MEDICINE

HARRY SCHWARTZ

ONCE AGAIN the propaganda barrage against the American health-care system is in full cry. The *Washington Post* headlines the "disgrace" of American health care. Jimmy Carter's Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, Joseph Califano, gets public attention with the farcical claim that pretty soon health costs will be so high that only Donald Trump will be able to afford medical care. The *Los Angeles Times* pontificates: "Despite its glaring failures, the American health-care system is the most expensive in the world. The United States is the only industrialized democracy without universal health insurance." And as usual there is no shortage of nostrum peddlers offering recipes for "universal health insurance."

If the proverbial visitor from Mars were to arrive and survey this cacophony, he would, as an unbiased observer, notice at least three different things that normally go unremarked in the invective of the health-care debate.

First, the quality of health care and its results never seem to surface among all the complaints. The reason is very simple: by virtually every significant indicator, the health of the American people is better than ever before. Americans are living longer than they ever have (but of course this raises Medicare's patient load and costs). Infant mortality continues its decline, as it did through all the Reagan years. Heart disease is still the leading cause of death in this country, but every year fewer Americans die of it. In general, more and better medical care is available to the American people than ever before, and large numbers of our people avail themselves of it every day. Proponents of "universal health insurance" don't want these facts known.

One important reason that our medical system performs so well in addressing the problems of most people is that since World War II we have been living through an unprecedented period of progress in medical knowledge and technology. The result is that we have drugs that can treat diseases that once were uniformly fatal. We have new machines and procedures that can diagnose diseases better than ever before. And we have new therapies that cure or at least palliate many diseases for which nothing could be done in the past. Moreover, the American medical system

is richly endowed with the results of all these advances, so they are broadly available to most Americans. Of course we all die eventually, and a new disease such as AIDS does offer a tragic counterpoint to the record of achievement.

Second, there are some serious contradictions in the indictment of American medicine, but so rigid is the thought control among the true believers that these contradictions are almost never addressed by the purveyors of conventional wisdom.

The most obvious contradiction is the one between the angry protests about the rising costs of medical care and the equally vociferous indignation about the large number of persons alleged to have no medical insurance. Depending upon whom you read, that number could be anywhere from thirty to forty million persons. But if what we spend on health care is already too great, won't the problem simply worsen if thirty to forty million more people are made fully eligible for free health care?

A RECENTLY PUBLISHED study gives us the characteristics of those without health-care insurance. About half are 24 years old or younger. They are most likely to work in agriculture, construction, personal services, or entertainment. A 19-year-old black or Hispanic counter clerk at McDonald's who earns \$4 an hour is probably a representative figure of the uninsured. But if these people are seriously ill, they usually get treated at some public or private hospital even though they can't pay the bills. That is why cynics claim the drive to give health-care insurance to everyone is really a debt-relief bill for hospitals and other health-care providers. That is probably extreme, but it does catch an aspect of the issue rarely referred to.

Finally, those clamoring for still more changes in the American health-care system never seem to want to discuss the fact that many of our present problems arise from yesterday's changes, which were backed by the same kinds of "progressive" thinkers responsible for today's clamor.

During World War II, for example, when there was federal wage control, big business made an end run around those controls by giving large numbers of workers free health insurance, thus creating a burden whose economic strains business leaders denounce today. After World War

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If the Federal Government poured billions of dollars into helping build more hospitals, all to frustrate the then-frightening hobgoblin of the "hospital shortage." Now the surplus of expensive hospital space is frequently denounced. In 1965 Congress voted to institute Medicare for senior citizens and the permanently disabled, and Medicaid for certain categories of our impoverished citizens, thus creating the programs about whose costs Congress and the President have been shrieking.

FOR MANY YEARS the dominant political culture in this country has been pressing for an American equivalent to the national health-insurance systems of Europe. The goal was and is "free" health care for everybody regardless of income. Until fairly recently cost was rarely considered. The chief goals were "access" (i.e., making as many people eligible for free care as possible) and adequacy of resources (i.e., increasing the number of hospitals and doctors so they would be available everywhere in this country). The strategy employed was the famous "salami tactic," making one advance at a time in the hope that before too long the final goal of national health insurance would be achieved.

To a large extent this program has succeeded. Most Americans now get all or most of their health care free of immediate out-of-pocket payment. We now have more doctors than ever before in our history, over 600,000, which is more than twice as many doctors as we had in 1965. Hospitals all over the country now have the latest equipment for cardiac catheterization, CT or MRI scans, and other exotic procedures. More heart, liver, kidney, and other transplants are done in this country than anywhere else in the world. The great majority of Americans who need the most advanced and most expensive high-technology medical miracles now get them routinely.

Health and long life are what human beings want more than anything else. As all the known resources that would advance those goals were made available to most Americans free or almost free of charge, the predictable happened. Hospitals and doctors found their business booming. And as usually happens when business booms, these health-care providers upgraded their services and raised their prices.



Patients, who paid little or nothing, didn't mind. But as the bills mounted, there was born the publicized crisis in health-care costs. Third-party payers who had to bear the costs—federal and state governments, and private employers—were appalled. Between 1965 and 1987, total health expenditures in the United States grew more than ten times, to more than \$500 billion. Third-party insurance had paid only about half of the bill in 1965; by 1987 it was paying well over 75 per cent of a much higher total.

This explosion of health-care usage and costs motivated employers who could escape these costs to do so by denying their employees health insurance. Even individuals who wanted to buy their own health insurance often found themselves priced out of the market. Obviously, where business had to contend with strong unions, as in the automobile industry, it was impossible to do away with health insurance, though in many industries the insurance was made somewhat less generous than earlier. But in industries where there are no significant unions—particularly but not exclusively the service industries—health insurance largely disappeared. The unemployed and the widowed also added to the numbers of those without insurance.

Thus both of the problems which are the focus of current criticism—the high cost of health care (to the third-party payers but not to most patients) and the substantial number of Americans without health insurance—flow directly out of the previous success of those demanding additional changes today. The refusal to face this fact explains why the current clamor is for more of the same policies that landed us in the present mess, i.e., "free" medical care for everybody.

BEING STUCK with the bills, the third-party payers have shown some realism in recent efforts to cut their costs. Employers have emphasized requiring larger deductibles and co-payments from their workers, so that a stay in the hospital or a visit to the doctor seems somewhat less free than it used to.

Private employers and government both have looked with great hope to Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs), which now enroll about thirty million Americans. An HMO gets a fixed annual capitation fee per member, in return for which it has to provide an agreed menu of medical services as needed during the year. Like other businesses, an HMO only makes money if it keeps its costs below its income. What this amounts to, therefore, is rationing by doctors. HMO physicians are constantly under pressure not to hospitalize patients, to do a minimum of X-rays and other tests, and to refer patients to outside consultants as rarely as possible. Fear of being sued for malpractice defines the minimum medical services HMOs dare to give.

A similar bent toward rationing is evident in the key measure the Federal Government has taken to try to cut Medicare's hospital costs. This is the DRG (Diagnosis Related Group) system for paying hospitals. A patient enters a hospital and is diagnosed. The diagnosis determines how much the hospital will be paid for the patient's care. This is a fixed dollar payment that takes no account of how much time the patient actually spends in the hospital or what procedures are performed on him. Here the incentives for the hospitals are to get patients discharged

quickly and to do as little as possible for them, again short of being sued for malpractice.

Outside the United States, the basic principle involved is well understood. This is the principle that a population's potential demand for "free" medical care is infinite and therefore must be curbed in one way or another.

In Britain, for example, the rationing device is what is—by American standards—a great shortage of surgical specialists and of hospitals. A hospital bed that does not exist does not incur costs; a surgeon who is not trained does not do operations that have to be paid for. The result is that in Britain at any given moment more than a half-million people are waiting for operations to be performed. Some of those people die while waiting, thus immediately providing an appreciable economy. It is unthinkable in the United States for a person to wait a year or two for a hip replacement, a cataract operation, or a hernia repair. Such long waiting periods are normal under Britain's National Health Service. The desire to avoid these long waits is a major reason why about 10 per cent of all Britons have private health insurance.

IN THE Soviet Union costs are kept down by making most medicines and modern medical devices unavailable. There are plenty of doctors, who traditionally have been among the most poorly paid of Soviet workers. But medicines of all kinds are scarce, and only the Communist Party elite has access to advanced medical treatments that are common in the West.

The term "national health insurance" has gone out of vogue here lately since this implies government-paid insurance, and everybody by now has heard of the horrendous federal deficit. So the current "in" term is "universal health insurance," which implies that industry will be expected to share the load with government. The key scheme here is the one backed in Congress by Ted Kennedy and his allies, who would like to make the provision of health insurance obligatory for all employers. The resulting decline in employment as employers decided that they would need fewer workers at the increased real cost—wages plus obligatory health insurance—does not seem to trouble Senator Kennedy.

There are a variety of other plans around. One focuses on the people who don't have health insurance; it would set up a special government health-insurance scheme for them, financed by taxes. Another scheme would reorganize American health care so as to regroup virtually all hospitals and doctors into huge HMOs with which employers or states would contract to provide coverage. A complicated system of taxation is involved in all this, but the primary goal is to end fee-for-service medicine and to ration all medical care in the same fashion as HMOs ration their services now. A third scheme would, essentially, transplant the Canadian health-insurance plan to the United States on the naïve assumption that a program that works more or less well for a relatively homogeneous population about one-tenth the size of ours would work here.

The common difficulty with these plans can be stated simply. Essentially they propose to retain all the health insurance that already exists and extend it to the thirty to forty million people without present coverage. They claim or imply that this can be done at a bearable cost which is

usually left vague despite the current outcry about the allegedly exorbitant cost of health care. While the sponsors stress all the benefits their schemes would supposedly bring, they show little interest in the possibility that their proposals would bring unacceptable new problems.

A common assumption in these programs is that the American medical system is now so wasteful that it can be cut materially and still give splendid care to everyone. But no proof is ever offered for that proposition. Put another way, the sponsors seek to square the circle by one or another system of rationing, while keeping their plans secret from the American people, who would be affected by this rationing.

At the core of all this discussion is an assumption that needs to be challenged. It is the assumption that health care is a right and nobody should be expected to pay a penny out of his own pocket for it. Hence, also, the conclusion that what we need are bigger and more inclusive schemes of "universal, comprehensive care."

A more prudent approach was suggested in the 1970s by Harvard Professor Martin Feldstein. The lack of attention that has been paid to his approach is more an indication of the dominant ideological prejudices than of any weaknesses in the Feldstein proposal. Here is a somewhat modernized version of this proposal, which deserves discussion and might help us achieve the goal of adequate medical care for all without socializing the medical system or making it the creature of a few giant corporations.

In effect, the proposal calls for the abolition of all existing third-party health-care schemes—Medicare, Medicaid, employer insurance, etc. In their place would be instituted a health-care system in which the initial responsibility for selecting health care and paying for it rests with the patient. The typical American spends less than \$1,000 a year on medical care. Many young people in the prime of life spend little or nothing. The typical American family can afford to pay for a few visits a year to the doctor and a few prescriptions. Most important, when people are paying their own money for health care, they will look for the best value; doctors and other providers will soon feel market forces. In this case there would be self-rationing as people gave up running to the doctor for every pimple or minor pain, a practice encouraged by many years of generous health insurance.

It is only when they are stricken by serious or catastrophic illness that most Americans need help. Catastrophic illness would be defined as an illness that cost more than some percentage of a family's annual income, and there could be vigorous debate about whether that figure should be 5, 10, or 15 per cent. It would be the costs of catastrophic illness, as here defined, that would be covered by insurance. Workers who now get employer-paid health insurance would get employer-paid catastrophic-illness insurance. Medicare and Medicaid (extended to cover all the poor based on some comprehensive definition) would be transformed by making the government liable only for the cost of catastrophic-illness insurance policies. By definition, the reformed Medicaid program would be close to a program of government-financed health insurance for the poor. The self-employed could buy a catastrophic-illness insurance policy and have the policy cost counted as part of their self-pay amount. And to make sure that the scheme did not provide either patients or doctors with keys to the

On the Track of a Sacred Cow

THATCHERITE hunters have ostensibly caught up with the biggest and most sacred of all the sacred cows in Britain's welfare state. Their proposals for the reform of the National Health Service have finally been published amid a great fanfare of headlines.

Something *had* to be done. The relentless pressure of demand for medical services at nil cost to the user, exacerbated by increasingly expensive new techniques and an aging population, has meant long waiting-lists, resentful staff (including politicized unions), and continuous political uproar.

For several years Mrs. Thatcher's government merely tinkered with the ramshackle structure of the NHS, adding and subtracting tiers of administration, putting ancillary services out to tender, shifting the allocation of resources, and pouring in ever more money (a one-third increase in real spending since 1979). But the waiting-lists persisted, hospitals remained squalid, overworked doctors cried for cash, and nurses went on strike. So the government instituted a root-and-branch, no-options-barred, confidential study of what could be done.

Just before the conclusions of that review were officially published, Labor's spokesman on health affairs, having received a stolen copy, announced them in detail. He presented them as a shock-horror agenda. In fact, there was neither shock nor horror.

The proposals carefully refrain from touching the sensitive roots of the NHS, which will continue to be funded, almost entirely, from taxation

and to supply every kind of medical care free or (for some prescriptions) at a nominal charge to the user. What they try to do is introduce market disciplines without a market—an "internal market," as it is called.

In summary: Britain's three hundred largest hospitals will be able to apply for "self-governing status within the NHS," meaning that they can negotiate their own pay scales and sell their services to the district Health Authority; doctors in a large group practice can apply for a cash budget with which to buy hospital services for their patients; money will "follow the patient" across district boundaries to wherever a doctor thinks the best services can be most quickly obtained; doctors will be subject to "medical audit" by their colleagues, and general practitioners will have a budget for their prescriptions; and anyone over the age of sixty will be allowed tax relief on private-health-insurance premiums.

The press reaction was generally, if mildly, favorable. Doctors' and nurses' organizations muttered uneasily. Neil Kinnock, the Labor Party leader, said: "All these proposals do is put cash before care—and a price on every patient."

The lines of forthcoming dispute were soon clear. NHS ideologists complain that an emphasis on cost will "poison the ethical basis of the NHS," and that valued but uneconomic local services may disappear. Cynics allege that doctors will be reluctant to accept expensive kinds of patients—the elderly, chronically sick, or mentally ill.

The doctors themselves are afraid that pressure to prescribe the cheapest drugs must limit their clinical freedom.

The one modest concession to the private sector—tax-deductible premiums for the over-sixties—sparked instant indignation. If the over-sixties are allowed to opt out, the welfare-staters cried, why in logic should other private patients not receive the same concession? And so on.

The automatic objections from within the NHS vividly illustrate the need for reform. The protest against a "cash-limited budget" shows how oblivious of reality the suppliers of a socialized service can become. No wonder resources have been misapplied and extra funds absorbed without effect. An "internal market" is better than no market, and, from the relative freedom being offered to doctors and hospitals, more freedom for the patient may later develop.

Although the government's proposals may strike some Conservatives as a missed opportunity, the opportunity to do more hardly existed as a matter of practical politics. Nobody starting from scratch and capable of learning from experience would now construct a National Health Service on the British model, with centralized government control, and everything free at the point of use. But Mrs. Thatcher and her colleagues had to start from where they were.

The moral for America is not to get into a similar situation. Sacred cows, once adopted, can eat you out of house and home—and seriously damage your health. —ANTHONY LEJEUNE

Treasury, there would be some utilization-review mechanism to make sure that treatment of catastrophic illness is appropriate and economical.

This system, if adopted, would immediately provide universal catastrophic-illness insurance. It would cover the poor automatically. And it would give average working-class and middle-class people confidence that serious illness in the family need not result in bankruptcy.

This proposal can be modified in many ways to improve it. It deserves attention because it would make health-care economics much more a matter of direct bargaining between patients and their doctors. It would rid both also of much of the plague of health-care paperwork. Government

help would go where it was needed when it was needed. And by creating a single method of health-care financing for serious illness, it would simplify much of the overly complex structure of the health-care system in America today.

Not the least virtue of this scheme is that it would end the irrational provision of free government health care to the likes of Armand Hammer, George Burns, and David Rockefeller. What is astonishing is that one should have to argue for the principle that the government should help only those who really need help. The liberals' failure to observe that principle explains the morass of health-care policy they now denounce so loudly. □

THE VIEW FROM THE CAMPS

*Once Congress cut off aid to the Contras, we were told,
it was only a matter of time: they would cease to fight effectively,
be driven out of Nicaragua, and then disperse.
In fact, a year later, there are surprising answers to the question:*

ARE THE CONTRAS FINISHED?

ELLIOTT ABRAMS

ON FEBRUARY 3, 1988, the U.S. Congress voted to end military aid to the Nicaraguan freedom-fighters. It was reasonable to predict, and no doubt many who voted against them hoped, that without this aid they would be unable to fight effectively, be driven out of Nicaragua, and then disperse. This last was most critical of all to their enemies, for the insufficiency of war matériel could always be remedied, and troops who walked out of Nicaragua could always walk back in. The real hope of the Contras' opponents, and the fear of their supporters, was that they would very quickly fall apart.

Today much of the discussion about Central America, and U.S. options there, assumes that this has happened. Even Contra supporters speculate about what, with the Contras gone, we should do next. And the Contras' old enemies in Washington argue that their quick dissolution shows they were never dedicated to their struggle anyway, but rather a bunch of mercenaries on the CIA payroll.

All this would be news to the roughly 12,000 Contra troops now camped in Honduras, ready and eager to fight again, and to the three thousand or so still fighting inside Nicaragua. They have not dispersed, they are not demoralized, and they are waiting for news from Washington.

In recent years, that news has alternated between very good and terrible. After early help, Congress voted to abandon the Resistance in 1984. The troops were forced to retreat into the Honduran camps, and the network of supporters they left behind was decimated by the Sandinistas.

In the summer of 1985, non-military aid was restored: \$27 million to last nine months. Fourteen months later \$100 million in military and non-military aid was voted, the high-water mark of U.S. support for the Resistance. Despite the calumny that the troops were happy to stay in Honduras and would never re-enter Nicaragua to fight, they rushed back into the fray as soon as equipment reached them. And in the ensuing 15 months, they proved that they were formidable. Their Stingers largely ended the utility of the Sandinistas' Soviet-supplied HIND helicopter gunships. They were able to recruit thousands of young

Nicaraguans and organize more than 15,000 combatants. They proved they could plan and implement operations involving thousands of troops, and maintain secrecy. They once again organized an extensive network of supporters, who brought them food and information and protected them.

And this military pressure forced the Sandinistas into significant concessions. When Contra strength was at its height, the Sandinistas were desperate to persuade Congress to undercut it; they allowed more political space in Nicaragua and signed the Esquipulas agreement, promising all sorts of fundamental changes in their regime. In fact, they promised the effective end of the Sandinista revolution: no subversion of El Salvador, full press freedom, free elections, freedom of religion, indeed all the "bourgeois" civil liberties. Congress, remarkably enough, took all these promises seriously, and went ahead to end military aid to the Resistance. It was, after all, no more than President Arias had asked for. He has assured everyone that were we only to cut off the Contras, the path to peace would open.

IN TRUTH, President Reagan's understanding of the Sandinistas proved right and President Arias's wrong. Once the Contra pressure was relieved the Sandinistas plowed ahead with their plans to produce a new Cuba. But meanwhile, a year after the fateful vote in Congress, how are the Contras faring?

Alas, the first two parts of the prophecy about the Contras proved accurate. With Soviet military aid to the Sandinistas continuing to pour in at the rate of \$500 million per year, the Resistance troops simply lacked the matériel needed to fight back: bullets, Stingers, secure communications equipment, mortar shells. Their stocks ran low, and then ran out. And so they began to avoid, rather than to seek, engagement, and to withdraw toward Honduras.

But one year later, they are intact. They have not dispersed and have not become refugees; they are still an organized military force. In the end, the prophets of doom proved false. How can we judge this?

First, numbers: there has been no significant reduction in their troop strength. A few men have left, but new recruits have replaced them. Second, discipline: they remain an

Mr. Abrams, former Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, is currently Distinguished Bradley Fellow at the Heritage Foundation.

army, organized hierarchically, under discipline. We do not read about pillaging of the Honduran countryside because it does not happen; friction with the Hondurans is minimal because the troops are well-behaved. Third, training: commanders do their best to keep the troops in good shape physically and mentally, and their success is remarkable. Morale, by *all* accounts, is very high. A congressional delegation that visited their key camp in Yamales, Honduras, in December was surprised by the high spirits and the continuing will to fight.

The Resistance intelligence chief recently told a visitor: "We are here, prepared to continue; the war has not ended, and the people will struggle until Nicaragua achieves democracy." When the liberal factotum Sol Linowitz tells the *New York Times* that "the possibility of a military solution using the Contras simply does not exist any more," he is doubly wrong. The Resistance seeks democracy, not a "military solution," and the possibility that military pressure could contribute to achieving that goal clearly continues to exist. But Mr. Linowitz's view is unsurprising, reflecting not only his politics but his ignorance of the current situation. His familiarity with the facts on the ground in Yamales is, to say the least, suspect.

The main enemy is boredom, and here the U.S. could do much more. In early 1988 the Reagan Administration sought the right to provide some training, even non-military training, but the House Democratic leadership turned it down. Not even literacy classes or calisthenics could pass muster with Jim Wright. New legislation could remedy this problem, but so could private citizens: would anyone like to donate baseballs, gloves, and bats, or books?

Why morale is so good, *why* the men are so stubbornly dedicated to their cause despite the spectacle of American inconstancy, is worth pondering. It cannot be money, for the troops get no salaries, and life in these camps is not easy. Nor can it be opportunism, for their cause is usually considered lost by more enlightened observers. They stay with it because of who they are and what they believe. They are, mostly, peasants. Most did not rebel against the Sandinistas in 1981, or 1982, or 1983; they waited until the situation was truly unbearable. They waited until the Sandinistas were simultaneously taking their land, attacking their Church, and conscripting them to fight against brothers in the Resistance whose goals they shared.

Those goals are simple to state: freedom for their Church, freedom for themselves, freedom to own and till their land. And they believe the only way to wrest all of these from the Sandinistas is to fight.

They have no illusions about us, and they do not expect that President Bush will be able to rush to their aid overnight. They have been told by Enrique Bermúdez, their commander, that it will take months for the U.S. to sort out its new policies, and that there is no possibility of military aid during that period. But they retain an extraordinary faith in America, a belief that in the end their interests and ours coincide and therefore we will help them free their country from Communism.

What are the lessons of this tale? First, the Contras' friends have been much closer to the truth about them than their detractors and their enemies. Far from being a faint-hearted or mercenary bunch, far from being ineffective or uncommitted, the past two years have proved them an admirable, competent, committed group of Nicaraguan

Can Gorbachev Afford Ortega?

CRITICS OF the Reagan Doctrine hope that Gorbachev will make the Sandinistas behave. They point to last summer's sharp criticism of Soviet foreign policy by a Soviet Foreign Ministry official, Andrei V. Kozyrev, in an official ministry publication, no less. He notes that "a primitive system was used to identify . . . the ultra-progressive phraseology of some individuals and movements in the developing countries with their socio-economic practices. . . . Meanwhile, while relying on foreign aid and practicing 'ultra-left-wing' anti-imperialist rhetoric, some regimes in these countries were in no hurry to solve the problems of hunger and backwardness. . . . there are no data about what it costs the Soviet Union to assist these countries. Estimates published in the West give rise to grave reflections about the returns from, and expediency of, this aid."

No wonder Alexander Cockburn hates the Soviet reformers; they're *major* heretics opposed to "world revolution." But the article seems to point more at the Soviets' various African and Asian clients than at Castro's unsinkable aircraft carrier or Ortega's Central American beachhead. Despite a budget deficit three times as large as previously thought, with defense spending a quarter of the total, Gorbachev hasn't given up on the Ortegas yet. Here are some of those Western estimates, from State and the Defense Intelligence Agency:

SOVIET AID TO NICARAGUA
(in millions of dollars)

Year	Military	Non-Military	Total
1980	\$ 10	Negligible	\$ 10
1982	\$140	\$180	\$ 320
1984	\$370	\$325	\$ 695
1986	\$550	\$536	\$1086
1988	\$515	n.a.	n.a.

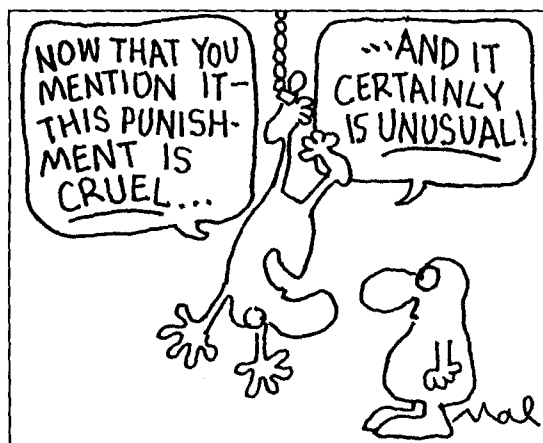
The Sandinistas are still talking about building a 600,000-man army. They can't afford it on their own. Will Gorbachev continue to help them militarize Central America?

—MARK CUNNINGHAM

patriots. They demonstrated their military prowess on the field of battle in 1987, but in a sense they proved something even more important in 1988: they demonstrated the strength of their dedication to the cause. Faced with vicious attacks from enemies in Washington, cut off by Congress, and with the end of Ronald Reagan's term approaching and Soviet aid arriving in Managua in unreduced quantities, they simply hunkered down for the longer haul. They are in this for keeps.

Which of course means we must decide whether we are. The Contras will not spare us the need to decide. For some, it would be comfortable if they became the latest group of victims, gone and soon forgotten, sad, but ultimately unable to cut the mustard. They can cut it. They will not abandon their country and their struggle. The question remains, will we? □

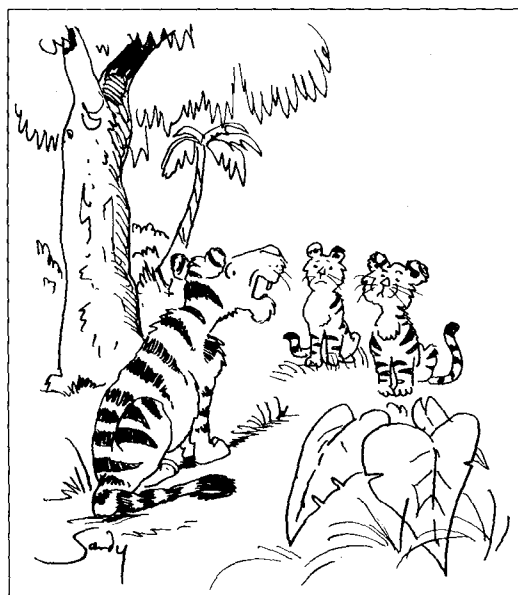
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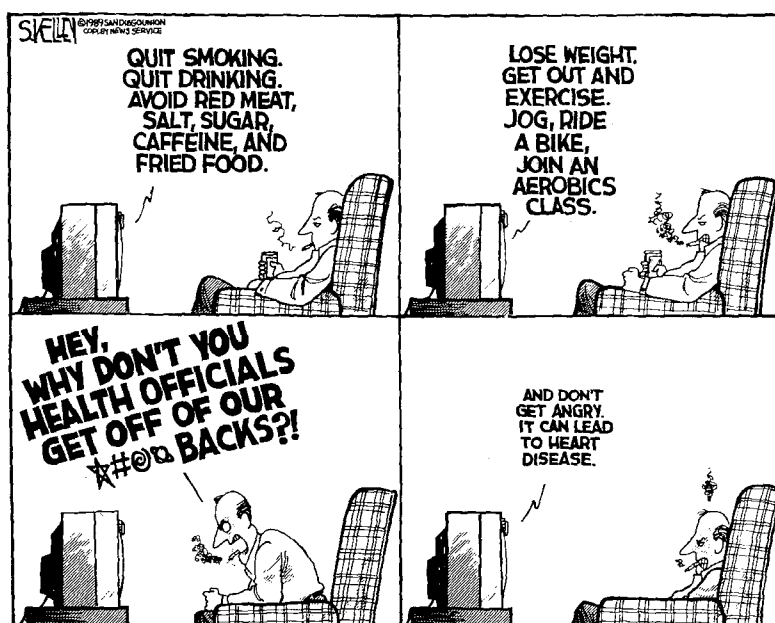
Cheers!

In Massachusetts, where Dukakis
Battles seas of reddest ink,
While Cuomo caulks the floors and ceilings
Lest *his* ship of state should sink,
Those lacking pity or compassion
Chortle as they hoist a few,
So join me on the poop to see this
Dreary duo fade from view.

W. H. VON DREELE



"The law of the jungle is that you must never burn bright in the forests of the night."



OWMAN THE OREGONIAN © 1989 BY TRIBUNE



CORPORATE APPEASEMENT

*In the Sixties, radical groups trashed Big Business;
they still do, only now they expect Big Business to pick up the tab.
And it does, with corporate foundations giving
twice as much to their enemies as to their friends.*

HOW BIG BUSINESS BANKROLLS THE LEFT

WILLIAM T. POOLE

The foundation exists and thrives on the fruits of our economic system. The dividends of competitive enterprise make it all possible. A significant portion of the abundance created by U.S. business enables the foundation and like institutions to carry on their work. In effect, the foundation is a creature of capitalism—a statement that, I'm sure, would be shocking to many professional staff people in the field of philanthropy. It is hard to discern recognition of this fact in anything the foundation does. It is even more difficult to find an understanding of this in many of the institutions . . . that are the beneficiaries of the foundation's grant programs.

IT MAY COME as a surprise to learn that these were not the sentiments of some anti-establishment activist, but of the thoroughly establishment Henry Ford II.

They were written when Ford resigned from the board of trustees of the Ford Foundation, having served on that board from 1943 to 1976; and it probably would be impossible to find another passage that better captures the essence of what is wrong with American philanthropy.

The organization for which I work, the Capital Research Center (1612 K Street, N.W., Suite 704, Washington, D.C. 20006), has for two years been engaged in an examination of corporate philanthropy in the United States. The first volume based on this study, *Patterns of Corporate Philanthropy: Public Affairs Giving and the Forbes 100*, written by Marvin Olasky of the University of Texas, was published in 1987; this year's edition, written by Roger Meiners and David Laband of Clemson University, has been expanded to include the *Forbes 250*. The results of both surveys are sobering. They indicate—in clear violation of what most would assume is both common sense and simple self-interest—a pattern of preference for causes of the moderate to less-moderate Left rather than for organizations and programs dedicated to the perpetuation of economic freedom under capitalism.

Olasky found that in 1985 (the most recent year for which data were available) \$7 of every \$10 contributed to public-affairs groups by the top 25 American companies was directed to "liberal or radical organizations."

Meiners and Laband found that, for the 131 firms on

which they were able to obtain information, the largest single recipient classification in 1986 (Left/liberal) received almost 20 per cent of the total; that the four most Left-oriented classifications received 26 per cent; and that the four most conservatively oriented classifications received only 3 per cent. Overall, 5.5 per cent went to groups in the center, while 36 per cent went to groups ranked to the right of center and 59 per cent went to those ranked as left of center.

The patterns one finds are often odd—almost schizoid. During 1985, Exxon gave \$125,000 to the Urban Institute and \$130,000 to the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), which generally take sharply differing positions on political and economic questions; in 1986, the amounts were less balanced: \$75,000 for the Urban Institute and only \$10,000 to AEI. Exxon also donated \$95,000 to the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, which sues corporations to force affirmative action, and \$96,000 to conservative, public-interest law firms, which defend them on the same issue; the totals for 1986 were, respectively, \$65,000 and \$49,000.

Similarly, AT&T and General Electric each contributed \$40,000 in 1985 to the Brookings Institution, probably the quintessential liberal Washington establishment institution, and another \$40,000 to AEI, a principal source of talent for successive Republican Administrations. In 1986, American International donated \$125,000 to Brookings and \$150,000 to AEI, while Ameritech gave \$5,000 to the relatively liberal, détente-oriented Council on Foreign Relations and a like amount to the more conservative Center for Strategic and International Studies.

But this is not the pattern one finds so disturbing. Both Brookings and AEI, as well as other organizations like the Heritage Foundation or the Council on Foreign Relations, are generally seen as part of the political and policymaking power structure in this country, so that contributing to both sides can be explained in terms of simple political prudence—the time-honored practice of covering one's bets.

What is alarming is the pattern of corporate-foundation support for organizations not of the establishment, but of the hard anti-corporate Left.

Aetna, for example, has supported the National Council of Churches-sponsored Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), which attacks corporate involvement

Mr. Poole is director of research for the Capital Research Center.

in the Strategic Defense Initiative, nuclear power, and arms production generally. Companies like Mobil and General Electric, which have relatively liberal giving records, are far from immune from ICCR attacks; Mobil is singled out for doing business in South Africa, and GE is condemned for "sustaining the arms race."

Then there is Honeywell, long a target of alleged "peace" activists because of its role in defense production. In 1984, Honeywell donated \$125,000 to help underwrite a series of seminars on "Prospects for Peacemaking: Rethinking National Security and Arms Control." The program for these seminars was developed by the University of Minnesota's Hubert H. Humphrey Institute in cooperation with the Minnesota League of Women Voters and the Washington, D.C.-based Committee for National Security.

The seminars were held in May and June of 1984, but did the protests abate? Of course not. Appeasement is always seen for what it is: the surest sign of weakness.

To Honeywell, this was "the first time a major military contractor [had] provided money and support for public discussion and research questioning the arms race." To the protestors, who had a far firmer grip on the realities of the situation, Honeywell's initiative proved that its "top executives [were] responding to a massive civil-disobedience campaign." The demonstrators simply redoubled their efforts, digging mock graves on Honeywell property and blocking the entrance to the company's offices until the police arrived. Far from calling off their campaign of harassment, a leader of the protestors said they would "continue to demonstrate at Honeywell until the company adopts a policy of 'economic conversion'" from military to non-military production (without, of course, any loss of jobs).

The Committee for National Security (CNS), which helped organize these anti-defense seminars with defense-contractor money, itself received \$5,000 in 1985 from Honeywell. According to the 1979-1980 annual report of the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), the pre-eminent intellectual center for the radical Left in the United States, IPS co-founder and board member Richard Barnet "played a major role in organizing the Committee . . . to mobilize broad support for détente to counter the voices calling for a return to confrontation and intervention." IPS further

boasted that its fellows were "instrumental" in organizing CNS and several other similar operations.

Another recipient of Honeywell's largesse in 1985 was the Peace Child Foundation, which in 1986 received an additional \$10,000 from Chevron, \$1,500 from Pillsbury, and \$5,000 from Xerox, as well as an unspecified amount from Mellon Bank. This foundation, according to the *Peace Resource Book*, is a youth-oriented activist group, founded in 1981, that focuses on "Arms Control" and "International Exchange" and supports productions of a "rock-musical fantasy," *Peace Child*.

It also tells readers of its newsletter to look to the Center for Defense Information for "factual stuff" on the "Military Industrial Complex," which it sees as a key obstacle to peace: "Weapons are often purchased for the benefit of major military contractors, not for the defense of the United States. . . . In contrast to the European arms industry, where most of the defense industry is in public hands, 99 per cent of the U.S. arms industry is privately owned." One wonders exactly why a defense contractor should be moved to support such blatant anti-defense propaganda.

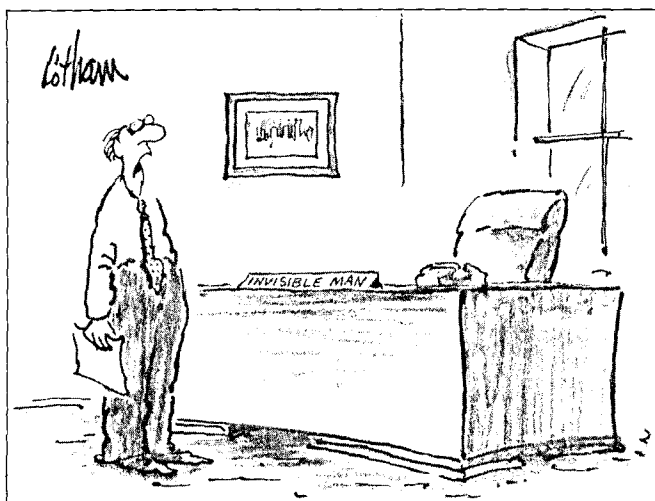
Amounts donated by companies often seem relatively small, but they can represent survival for an ideologically motivated activist group.

IN 1985, the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund received grants from 24 of the one hundred largest companies, including American Express, AT&T, Ameritech, Atlantic Richfield, Bell South, Burlington Northern, Chrysler, Coca-Cola, Dart & Kraft, Dayton Hudson, Eastman Kodak, Federated Department Stores, General Motors, Goodyear, Johnson & Johnson, Manufacturers Hanover, Merrill Lynch, J. C. Penney, NYNEX, Phibro-Salomon, Philip Morris, R. J. Reynolds, Standard Oil, and Xerox. Other companies supported the Fund's parent organization, the National Organization for Women, which works for increased regulation and government involvement in hiring, firing, pay, pension issues, health insurance, and similar areas and is a strong opponent of conservative policies generally.

In 1986, the Fund received support, ranging from \$500 to \$15,000, from Allegis, Ameritech, AT&T, ARCO, Burlington Northern, Capital Cities, Chemical Bank, Coca-Cola, Dayton Hudson, Eastman Kodak, Federated Department Stores, General Mills, Kraft, Standard Oil, and Xerox, in addition to unspecified amounts from American Express and Merrill Lynch.

The Fund says that support from "the corporate community" has helped it "make important advances." These "advances" have been made in areas—like "comparable worth," affirmative action, and access to abortion—in which it often litigates against corporations; yet the Fund claims that "more than 150 corporations and institutions" aid its work "with business, labor, social, religious, and government organizations."

Similarly, the Ms. Foundation provides financial and other assistance to groups active in such areas as comparable worth, "reproductive rights" and abortion, "lesbian rights," voter registration, and "the empower[ment] of . . . low-income women and women of color" who "are the least-empowered people in our society."



"I know you're in here, Ferguson!"

In 1985, this overtly radical program was supported by Aetna, Allied Stores, AT&T, Atlantic Richfield, Dayton Hudson, Exxon, General Motors, RCA, and Westinghouse. During 1986, it received an additional \$25,000 from Aetna, \$10,000 from Dayton Hudson, and \$15,000 from Exxon.

Another particularly egregious example is the Youth Project, a nationwide funding and technical-support apparatus for the radical Left. It likewise has received funding from some of the best-known names in American business: Aetna, American Can, Avon Products, Best Products, Cummins Engine, Dayton Hudson, Ford, Foremost-McKesson, General Mills, Hearst, McDonald's, Monsanto, Mutual Benefit Life, New Jersey Bell, Newsweek, J. C. Penney, Prudential, Charles H. Revson, Rockefeller, Helena Rubinstein, Levi Strauss, and Xerox, in addition to the Samuel Rubin Foundation, which is based on the Fabergé cosmetics fortune and which has been the principal financial guarantor of the Institute for Policy Studies since its inception.

Again, this support, while it may not always represent large dollar amounts, is of the greatest importance. The Youth Project exists to facilitate "organization building" and "networking" on the radical Left; and because these efforts are national in scope, support for them necessarily has a ripple effect.

The Youth Project's former executive director, New Left activist Margery Tabankin, served as director of Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) during the Carter Administration. Instead of maintaining programs of "direct services to low-income people," Miss Tabankin has written, VISTA emphasized "institution-building" because "mobilizing resources for system-building" creates "a multiplier effect by 'leav[ing] behind institutions that give shape to poor people's hope and aspirations, that express their expertise, channel their energies, and develop their leadership capacities.'" VISTA was supporting "the self-help movement,

the neighborhoods movement, [and] the cooperatives movement" to encourage "community self-help and citizen participation to fight poverty."

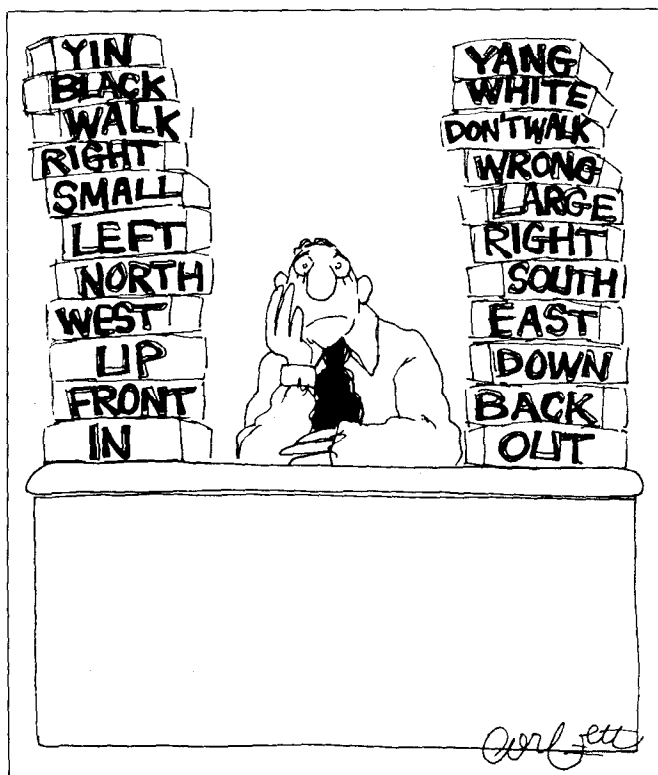
Corporate support for the Youth Project means capitalist money for a remarkably broad range of radical priorities, many of them direct outgrowths of New Left movements of the 1960s and early 1970s. A representative sampling of Youth Project grantees since 1972 includes the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN); the American Friends Service Committee; the Campaign for Economic Democracy, founded by Tom Hayden and now known as Campaign California; the Capp Street Foundation, closely associated with activities of the National Lawyers Guild (NLG); the Center for Constitutional Rights, also closely interlocked with the NLG; the Christic Institute; the Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition; the Council on Economic Priorities; the Environmental Action Foundation; the Fund for Peace; the Illinois Public Action Council; the Infant Formula Action Coalition (INFAC); the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility; the Institute for Social Justice; Massachusetts Fair Share; the Midwest Academy; the National Council of Churches; the National Lawyers Guild itself; the Natural Resources Defense Council; the North American Congress on Latin America; the Ohio Public Interest Campaign; the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund; the TransAfrica Forum, and the Washington Office on Latin America.

THE YOUTH PROJECT also has supported the Political Rights Defense Fund (a front for the Trotskyist Communist Socialist Workers Party), the Metropolitan Council on Housing, and Women for Racial and Economic Equality, both of which, like the National Lawyers Guild, have been characterized as fronts for the Communist Party U.S.A.

To understand the importance of the Youth Project, however, to say nothing of the importance of corporate support for it, one must realize the extent and consistency of its support over the years for the Institute for Policy Studies, whose co-founder has described Marxism as one of the world's "positive social philosophies" and has said that "we are all Marxists—either by using that analysis or playing out . . . the tragic role Marx foresaw."

S. Steven Powell notes in *Covert Cadre* that the Institute's "general activities consistently emphasize two overriding goals: dismantling the capitalist economic order and reshaping public-sector institutions in ways that give the Left political power thus far denied by the electoral process." No less instructive is the view of the man who, until recently, was the Institute's director, Robert Borosage (late of the Jesse Jackson campaign). Mr. Borosage believes the Institute's "job is to expose the moral and political bankruptcy of the ideas and assumptions now governing America, to offer a feasible alternative vision, and to work with citizen groups and popular movements to make that vision a reality."

In the view of former New Left activist David Horowitz, the Institute's "ingenuous political façade" masks "hidden agendas." Aspects of its style "are flexible and disarming," thereby "suggesting an element of spontaneity and political innocence. But its substance is defined by the covert agendas that shape its attitudes of unrelenting hostility toward



the United States, and solidarity with Soviet-backed regimes." The Institute's roots are "in the Old Left paradigm, which the New Left had tried but failed to change." Horowitz adds that "by 1978 IPS had become the institutional base of another generation of political survivors: the New Leftists who personified this failure, who even before the decade was out had returned to their political roots, as fifth-columnists for totalitarians in power."

With its extensive support from corporations and other foundations, the Youth Project has helped underwrite IPS at least since 1979, in addition to providing equally consistent support for the nationwide network of groups and publications created by the Institute or otherwise rooted in its programs. This network includes the Center for Investigative Reporting, whose personnel interlock with the IPS-created Foundation for National Progress and FNP's anti-corporate *Mother Jones* magazine; the Committee for National Security, in the creation of which IPS co-founder and trustee Richard J. Barnet "played a major role"; the Economic Policy Institute, founded in 1986 with Jeff Faux, who has been active in IPS projects, as president and director; and the Foundation for National Progress, self-described as "formed in 1975 to carry out on the West Coast the charitable and educational activities of the Institute for Policy Studies." The network also includes the Government Accountability Project, an acknowledged IPS project created in 1975 as "a resource and support center for government whistleblowers"; the Institute for Food and Development Policy, founded by IPS fellow Joseph Collins; the Institute for Southern Studies, founded by IPS in 1970, and its magazine *Southern Exposure in These Times*, described by IPS as "a biweekly newspaper published by an independent project of the Institute"; the National Center for Policy Alternatives, created in 1975 as the National Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policies, in the words of its former coordinator, to promote "a politics of how to change to a democratic, decentralized, socialism from a corporate, monopolistic state"; the Pacific News Service, founded in 1970 to report on Southeast Asia from an antiwar perspective; Policy Alternatives for the Caribbean and Central America, in which IPS fellows have played a leading role; the Riverside Church Disarmament Program, in which IPS acknowledges its fellows "have been active organizers"; and *Working Papers for a New Society*, initially a quarterly publication sponsored with the Cambridge Institute for Policy Studies, created by IPS in 1969.

The Institute for Policy Studies received \$20,000 from Archer Daniels Midland in 1986. During the same year, the Government Accountability Project received \$5,000 from Borg-Warner; and the Institute for Local Self-Reliance received \$5,000 from Exxon and another \$5,000 from Standard Oil.

THE PATTERN found in public-affairs giving among American businesses and their related foundations is thus one of support for environmental, feminist, minority, "peace," philanthropic, and other pressure groups that turn reflexively to government rather than to the private sector for solutions to national problems. Whatever donors' motivations may be in the case of the more raucous of these special interests, the appearance is one of

attempted appeasement—which, as we have seen in the case of Honeywell, has, at best, limited utility.

Some conservatives wonder whether corporate philanthropy simply diverts attention from what economist Paul MacAvoy has called "the social goals inherent in maximum production" or even, on philosophical grounds, whether business has the right to involve itself with more general social questions beyond the range of its economic concerns.

But because any corporation has to operate within the community, the issue, in terms of practical reality, becomes not whether business should contribute to public-affairs causes, but how one assures that, at an absolute minimum, a company does not wind up subsidizing the enemies of the system that makes its profits (and therefore its ability to contribute money) possible in the first place.

Those responsible for contributions must look at how money already contributed has been used. Simply duplicating a previous year's gift is not enough. In the case of minority-oriented groups, for example, the very least that should be ascertained is whether they continue to attack the company through "comparable worth" and affirmative-action litigation.

It must be recognized that grants can never be made in a philosophical vacuum. The question to be asked in all cases is whether the applicant supports or opposes private enterprise and the values that underlie it. Are any claimed short-term benefits really greater than the long-term damage that can be self-inflicted by granting money to the company's opponents? And would the company's stockholders be likely to agree? Most Americans favor economic growth, less government spending and regulation, traditional social norms, and strong national defense. Should Americans fatten the coffers of corporations that support groups fundamentally opposed to these?

Conservatively inclined CEOs should resist schemes to have contributions managers trained and certified by "professional" philanthropic trade associations, or to direct contributions through intermediaries (community foundations and the like) supposedly able to distribute the money more professionally. Each of these notions, by its very nature, tends to increase the power of philanthropic "professionals" traditionally partial to leftist social-engineering nostrums, thereby lessening the power of executives to control their own programs.

Instead, CEOs can appoint senior executives or outside analysts of like mind to examine contributions policies and suggest long-term remedies. They should ask whether contributions really help defend the free market, foster economic growth, and support the values shared by the vast majority of Americans.

Vocal and well-organized groups on the Left have made themselves heard and have benefited from significant amounts of corporate America's money. There is no reason why advocates of more traditional positions on political, economic, and social issues should not to be equally vocal—and equally heeded.

Many years ago, Andrew Carnegie pithily observed that "of every \$1,000 spent in so-called charity today, it is probable that \$950 is unwisely spent." I have no idea whether Carnegie's sentiments are still accurate statistically, but the fundamental message, especially as applied to corporate philanthropy in America, remains valid. □

OIL WARRIORS

*Mexico's corrupt oil union leaders
thought they had the new President cornered.
They thought he was a 90-pound weakling—
but the wimp shot first. Now he's a*

BALD MAN ON A HORSE

GEORGE BYRAM LAKE

CARLOS SALINAS DE GORTARI was supposed by many of his countrymen to be a weak "interim" president with no real constituency and, given the three-way division of the vote and the usual *alquimia electoral* of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), a highly dubious claim to his office. He is young (41), short, and bald. Not even his best friends would claim that he looks—in a useful Mexican term—"presidenciable." Nevertheless, little more than a month into his six-year term as president, Salinas stepped boldly forward and decapitated a monster that none of his predecessors in office had dared confront: the 210,000-member Petroleum Workers' Union.

The *Sindicato Revolucionario de Trabajadores Petroleros de la Republica Mexicana* (SRTPRM), to use its full pompous title, is the richest and probably the most corrupt union in Latin America, where there are many. Its leaders have blackmailed a succession of Mexican presidents into granting them unconscionable privileges under threat of closing down *Petroleos Mexicanos* (Pemex), the government-owned drilling, refining, and marketing monopoly.

Since Pemex provides 40 per cent of the near-bankrupt country's hard-currency income and fills most of its energy needs, the effects of even a brief shutdown could be disastrous. Threats of a strike and hints of sabotage paid off on a grand scale for the union *jefazos*. Several of them are correctly described as filthy rich.

Among the concessions was the right to let 40 per cent of all Pemex contracts. Multimillion-dollar deals for drilling, transportation, and refinery maintenance were given to companies secretly owned by union officials. Others were sold to companies that paid the unionists a "finder's fee" of 35 per cent. Nobody outside knows how many millions of dollars were siphoned off because of these "rights."

The concessions were supposed to finance social work among the members, and the union does in fact operate a large variety of agricultural and business enterprises, ranging from cattle ranches and chicken farms to vulcanizing plants and funeral homes. Members and their families undoubtedly benefited through lower-than-market prices; union officials benefited, much more.

Carlos Salinas de Gortari won the enmity of the *petroleros* in 1984 when, as Budget and Planning Minister

under President Miguel de la Madrid, he abolished or curtailed some of the union's pipelines into the Pemex treasury. This was part of the de la Madrid administration's drive to get the Mexican government out of its overstuffed, money-losing, and politicized business operations, which drive Salinas pledged to continue: hence the *petroleros'* opposition to his nomination for the presidency. In the general election last July 6, Salinas was defeated in most of the oil-center cities, and scraped through to victory with a bare majority. The union vote went predominantly to Salinas's main rival, Cuauhtémoc Cardenas, who advocates repudiating Mexico's \$105-billion foreign debt. The petroleum union is believed to have largely financed the Cardenas campaign, although he denies it.

THE SIMMERING struggle between Salinas and the oil workers' leaders reached the boiling point soon after Salinas took office. Joaquín Hernández Galicia, known to all as La Quina, has been for years the *cacique todopoderoso*—all-powerful dictator—of the *petroleros*. Addressing thousands of members in Ciudad Madero, he issued a flat challenge to the government. He mentioned rumors that Salinas intended to "privatize" some Pemex operations, and added, "We will go on strike if there's any attempt to turn over one millimeter of Pemex to private enterprise, whether national or foreign."

That was the most defiant and explicit of his challenges to the authority of the president. Two days later, on the morning of January 10, Salinas struck back.

Ciudad Madero has for years been the headquarters of La Quina. Almost everybody in that town, and in Tampico, Poza Rica, and other oil centers, was answerable to him. La Quina appointed mayors and judges. He selected policemen, congressmen, and even issued taxi licenses to hundreds of drivers who formed part of his surveillance system. He chose the coroners in the district, a privilege that came in handy when one of his rivals, killed in an arranged car crash, was pronounced a suicide.

Although no sparrow fell in Ciudad Madero without his consent, La Quina was also the town's great benefactor. He paved the streets, put up houses and public buildings (including the Quinadome convention center), and acted in general as a Robin Hood for his subjects. For that reason,

Mr. Lake writes frequently for NR about Mexican affairs.

Salinas's plans for him had to be organized in deep secrecy in the office of the attorney general in Mexico.

On January 10, an Army commando unit announced its arrival in Ciudad Madero by blowing open La Quina's door with a bazooka. The shot was heard in all 31 of Mexico's states. The attorney general announced that La Quina and ten bodyguards had returned fire, killing a federal agent. La Quina's bathrobe and slippers, the bodyguards, a dozen or so of the chief's attendants, and several hangers-on were flown to a Mexico City jail.

An assortment of military weapons, including two hundred new Uzi machine guns and several boxes of ammunition, were seized in La Quina's office. Paraffin tests showed that La Quina was among those who fired on the commandos. Later news reports from eyewitnesses in Madero contended that the only firing was done by the raiders.

Almost all the other top officials of the union were scooped up in simultaneous but less dramatic raids in several cities. At the same time military guards were posted in the Pemex skyscraper office building in Mexico City, and in oil fields, refineries, and petro-chemical plants. Hundreds of La Quina's *uncondicionales*, or henchmen, were suspended from union-operated businesses.

Word of the arrests spread quickly, touching off a rush to filling stations all over the country. Many *gasolineras* ran dry. Others rationed gasoline to regular customers until the panic subsided late the next day.

The only prominent union figure missing from the first roundup was Salvador (Chava) Barragán Camacho, La Quina's second in command. Chava left his home in a Mexico City suburb at 6 A.M., explaining that he had a dental appointment. Since nothing in Mexico opens before 9:30, the police suspect him of a falsehood. Chava took sanctuary in the office of Fidel Valázquez, the head of the Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM). Toward the end of a long day, while soldiers prowled outside, Chava suffered a heart attack and was taken to a hospital under guard.

The labor unions are one of the three pillars of the long-ruling PRI, the other two being the organized *campesinos* (farmers) and the huge federal and state bureaucracies. The *petroleros* are, therefore, a power within both the PRI and the CTM. For that reason, Valázquez initially denounced the arrest of La Quina and associates as an attack on organized labor.

President Salinas and the attorney general repeatedly

denied the charges, emphasizing their admiration of labor unions, and insisting that the arrests were an essential exercise of government power against criminal activities.

The *petroleros* staged angry demonstrations. In Mexico City's *zócalo* some six thousand of them demanded the release of their leaders. The Mexican Left and sizable segments of the public were frightened by the raids and critical of the use of the army in conducting them. But media pictures of the arms, jewels, and \$800,000 in cash found in the trunk of Chava's car helped swing public opinion behind President Salinas. Within a few days both the CTM and the SRTPRM ran full-page newspaper ads pledging their loyalty to the president and to the PRI.

A day or so after the arrests, the attorney general's office announced that La Quina and friends had deposits of \$3.2 billion in New York City banks, and that other large sums were expected to turn up elsewhere. A little later the \$3.2 billion figure was retracted, and "a lot of money" substituted.

La Quina and nearly forty others confessed to most of the charges. However, in line with Mexican custom they subsequently repudiated the confessions on the ground that they were extorted by threat of torture.

A federal judge convicted La Quina and others of illegal possession of military weapons, complicity in murder, fraud, and "inexplicable enrichment." Under Mexican law they will be given an opportunity sometime in the future to prove their innocence. Success in that seems unlikely.

THERE IS NOTHING inexplicable about most of La Quina's wealth. Government lawyers say that he sold Pemex jobs for the equivalent of \$200 each. Few applicants had that much cash, of course, but that presented no problem. When the worker arrived at the Pemex office he was asked to sign a blank promissory note. La Quina sold the note to a friend and the payments were taken in installments from the worker's pay at Pemex headquarters. That racket had been going on for years, and by one account, had netted La Quina \$672,000.

Union sale of jobs is one reason why the Pemex payroll is at least double that of other oil businesses of comparable size. Also on the payroll are several thousand *aviadores*—friends or relatives of *influentes* in the union or the government. Their only exertion is to pick up their salary checks.

By knocking off La Quina and associates in the SRTPRM, President Salinas has removed perhaps the greatest of several obstacles to his plans for modernizing the government, and making the political system more democratic and less sclerotic.

But the situation remains volatile. The prolonged austerity program forced on the country by the waste and corruption of past administrations has left the living standards of the working class at a perilously low level. Millions are unemployed or eke out a miserable living at such jobs as washing windshields or by performing as fire-eaters.

Fortunately the public realizes that Mexico is more than ripe for change and now seems solidly behind Salinas. His decisive action against the *petroleros* also has favorably impressed American and other foreign banks from whom he hopes to borrow some \$6 billion needed to pull the country out of its current desperate economic doldrums. □



THE GREAT SOCIETY STRIKES BACK

*Raising children can be expensive,
so congressional liberals want to take on the job.
President Bush wants to make it cheaper.
What'll it be? An entitlement, or your money back?*

THE DAY-CARE REFORM JUGGERNAUT

RON HASKINS AND HANK BROWN

ONE OF THE hottest issues now on the Washington social policy agenda is day care. There is a near-consensus that something should be done; the danger is that conservatives and moderates will be seduced into supporting a liberal initiative that is a guaranteed disaster.

Day care is a problem for many mothers, in part because of social changes that have seen more single, full-, and part-time working mothers than ever before. These make such traditional solutions as having relatives or friends watch the kids more difficult. But the "child-care crisis" is in fact part of a far larger problem: raising children is expensive, whether you use day care or not. Those who focus their efforts on day care at the expense of other needs of children and parents are pushing a very particular horse.

Stripped of rhetoric, "child care," as enshrined in the Democrats' Act for Better Child Care (ABC), boils down to the familiar liberal approach to social problems: intervene directly in the market, put lots of restrictions on the type of service and who can provide it (thus greatly increasing the cost to the point where many families can no longer afford the service), then dole out federal cash in subsidies so that millions of families become dependent on the government. As Aaron Wildavsky notes, Democrats use spending to create constituents.

Now, many conservative constituents argue that day care is intrinsically inferior to home care. But Congress is not that receptive to the arguments of social conservatives. It will take the position that it should not engage in social engineering, "forcing" women out of the job market. But the "child-care" initiatives are also social engineering, for they assume 1) that day care per se is the main problem, 2) that the Federal Government is better equipped than parents to determine the appropriate type and cost of day care, and 3) that the best type happens to be professional day care—the most expensive kind.

It's not too late to avoid the creation of yet another entitlement, if we can shift the ground from rhetoric to facts. Last year, Congress heard a thousand anecdotes about families that could not find the kind of care they wanted; of course, Congress can find an anecdote to support any

point of view on any social problem. But if there is a supply crisis, prices should be going up. Survey data make it plain that prices have risen quite modestly in the past decade, about 8 per cent. For most families, day care is at most a nagging problem, not a crisis.

Another false claim about cost, one slavishly repeated in the media, is the statement that day care currently costs \$3,000 a year per child, more in many populous areas. In fact, national surveys show that the average American family with a working mother spends about \$1,400 per year on care. Even if the families that get free care from relatives (the grandmothers the regulators are so eager to replace with expensive professionals) are eliminated from the calculations, and if only families with a mother who works full-time are included, the average expenditure is still only about \$2,100 per year.

To be fair, this is still a considerable expense for some families. Sandra Hofferth, an analyst at the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C., estimates that single, black mothers with earnings below the poverty line pay an astounding 26 per cent of their earnings for child care: the national average is about 10 per cent.

PERSONAL EXEMPTIONS FOR A FAMILY OF FOUR IN 1987 DOLLARS

1912	45,977
1931	32,090
1940	22,764
1945	11,321
1984	4,376
1987	7,600

But the truth is, these figures are so high because Congress goes in for disguised social engineering in the matter of child care—through the tax code. By allowing the personal income-tax exemption, and the deductions for dependents to be virtually wiped out by inflation, we have instituted de facto fiscal discrimination against everyone with children, whether the mother is single or married, working or at home.

Mr. Haskins is a Republican staffer for the House Ways and Means Committee; Mr. Brown is the ranking Republican on the Ways and Means subcommittee responsible for Social Security.

In his budget, President Bush has begun to restore these deductions, at least for the poorest families; we can let them keep their money so that they can raise their children the way they think best. That's a genuine solution to what is the real problem, namely, the tax on children.

Is there, then, any remaining reason to regulate day care? Fiery, anecdotal congressional testimony tells us that unregulated care isn't safe. But the biggest study ever to address the safety of unregulated care was conducted in 1981 by Abt Research Associates and Stanford Research Associates. Based on a comparison of nearly eight hundred regulated and unregulated day-care homes in Philadelphia, San Antonio, and Los Angeles, the authors were "consistently impressed" by the quality of care and concluded that it was "stable, warm, and stimulating," that it "cater[ed] successfully to the developmentally appropriate needs of the children in care," and that parents who used unregulated care were highly satisfied.

So regulation addresses a problem that has been wildly exaggerated. But it goes on to create its own problem—increased costs. Virtually everyone agrees that imposing regulatory requirements, whether directly or through the states, will bring dramatic cost increases. Researchers at the University of North Carolina recently estimated that standards such as those sure to result from federal regulation will nearly double the cost of care. This is a surprisingly frank assessment, given the researchers' strong support for federal regulation: many families will not be able to bear the additional costs and will therefore need government assistance.

But in an era of \$150-billion budget deficits, that government assistance just won't be forthcoming in the required amounts. Currently, about four million children, under age five and with working mothers, receive paid care, at an average cost of \$42 per week. The North Carolina study estimated that the cost of "quality" care would average about \$100 per week; if this increase is applied only to those four million children, the added cost is \$12 billion, on top of the nearly \$7 billion the government already spends on day care. With the S&L and nuclear clean-up crises, the government can't pick up that bill.

So who will? Everyone with children in day care will pay more, but poor families will pay a much higher proportion of their incomes. Sandra Hofferth's poor urban mothers will have to pay *more* than 26 per cent of their incomes, increasing an already substantial disincentive to work. In other words, the proposed regulations hit the neediest hardest.

Given the dubious benefits and costs of regulation, why are so many so intent on establishing federal regulations? No doubt, some are convinced that their actions will increase children's well being. But there are other reasons, having more to do with the self-interest of those advocating regulation and subsidies than with children's safety.

Costs jump dramatically when regulations are imposed because day-care facilities must then hire more workers—and those workers must be more like teachers than nannies because they must meet bureaucratic standards of quality (presumably ensuring quality day care the way we've ensured quality education). Thus, "child-care specialists" will be influential in the provision of day care; they're sure to guard the entitlement program better than grandmothers. New special interest group number one.

And regulation doesn't work without enforcement; with at least 1.5 million day-care homes and forty thousand centers to be regulated, we can expect a lot of oversight—and further costs, and a burgeoning, "necessary," bureaucracy. New special interest group number two.

In addition, the increased costs make government subsidies necessary. As government creates those subsidies through legislation such as the ABC bill, it creates yet another large block of voters with an interest in maintaining yet another federal program and the politicians who support it. And mothers are very hard to attack as a special interest group. Number three.

THOUGH ABC failed last year, liberals did make surreptitious progress toward their day-care objectives under the guise of welfare reform. Strong regulatory provisions were a part of the welfare bill until a few days before final enactment; conflicts between Democrats from various House committees allowed Ways and Means Republicans to mute the call for federal regulation. But one significant provision still crept in: welfare mothers who find work and so escape welfare now get one year of both day care and health insurance, so that losing these benefits will not be a disincentive to work. This creates an inequity Congress is sure to try to fix: surely a woman who worked to stay off welfare, even though she was as deserving as another who did not, should be entitled to that same free year?

When this refrain, along with the others we've mentioned, is heard in Congress this month, moderates and conservatives, led by President Bush, should insist that major new grant money for day care, all-encompassing federal day-care regulation, and other broad disruptions of the market are unacceptable. If Congress then passes such measures, a presidential veto could almost certainly be sustained.

Those of us concerned about the real problem should also support the President's initiative: to increase the deduction for dependent children, at least for low-income families. This addresses many of the issues on the national social policy agenda: 1) it's better than raising the minimum wage because it focuses benefits on low-income families without increasing the cost of labor and thus throwing out of work the very people it intends to help; 2) it's better than heavy-handed regulation of the day-care market because it allows families rather than bureaucrats to control day-care expenditures (in terms both of how much to spend and what sort of program in which to place children) while simultaneously not discriminating against low-income working families that choose to raise their children at home; 3) it's better than day-care subsidies or vouchers because all the money spent on the "program" goes directly to benefit those who need it—none is wasted on handling by bureaucrats; and 4) it's better than an expanded welfare program because it makes work more attractive by effectively increasing wages.

Most important of all, the Bush initiative obviates the need for federal day-care regulation by leaving responsibility and control in the hands of those who best know the needs of children and working mothers: the mothers, and fathers, themselves. By so doing, it avoids one of the greatest hoaxes of modern social legislation: that families can safely yield yet another responsibility to big government. □

SOCIAL CLIMBER'S GUIDE TO VIENNA

AN ACCOUNT OF the violence and corruption practiced by friends of Austria's left-wing political elite has recently taken its place near the top of the Austrian best-seller list. Packing 672 pages of political dynamite, *The Lucona Case*, by Austrian journalist Hans Pretterebner, has already sold 75,000 copies. (Austria's population is less than eight million. A proportionately successful American release would have to sell more than two million copies!)

Even before the book came out, every Austrian knew its villain, the Socialist socialite Udo Proksch. His intrigues and adventures, along with multiple marriages, divorces, and affairs involving some top-drawer ladies, have long been common gossip. Son of an ardent SS man who served a two-year prison sentence after the war, Proksch is a twentieth-century combination of Cagliostro and Casanova rolled into one. Anything but handsome, neither a dazzling *bon vivant* nor even an elegant dresser, this short, muscular fellow has nevertheless maintained intimate friendships with members of both sexes. Perhaps because he did not have a winning personality, good looks, or a "background," he came to lust after power, money, and influence. After dropping out of school, he tramped all over Europe, involved himself in some shady businesses, served as an advisor to various Soviet intelligence services, and finally ended up the owner of Vienna's most renowned and historic café and pastry shop, Demel.

Now no one in London, New York, or Chicago would think to buy a café-pâtisserie as a means of accumulating riches, making political connections, and fulfilling social ambitions. But in Vienna, with its famous café society, the device worked, in no small part because of Udo's shrewd decision to open a private club on the café's upper floor. Club 45, as it was called—perhaps to commemorate the Red Army's liberation of Vienna in 1945?

—attracted as members some of the highest-level officials in Austria's Socialist Party, including several current and former cabinet ministers. The Socialists enjoyed the club's exclusive atmosphere and were impressed by Udo's accounts of his experiences, adventures, and connections.

But in the end, Udo Proksch went a step too far. With the money he brought in from Demel and Club 45, he expanded the range of his investments and began building up letterhead corporations right and left. Not long after buying a bankrupt Swiss corporation with assets including an inactive coal mine and some tool sheds, he announced that his new acquisition had sold a complete unassembled nuclear power plant to an unnamed Asian nation and would be shipping the plant by boat from the Italian port city of Chioggia. Crates allegedly full of nuclear equipment and marked as "transit goods" made it past customs officials without inspection, and were loaded onto the Dutch-owned transport ship *Lucona*. With the assistance of Austria's then minister of foreign affairs—a friend of Proksch's and a member of Club 45, who oversaw the whole operation—Proksch saw to it that two very special containers were placed in the middle of the boat at the bottom of the cargo hold.

Before setting sail, the precious cargo was insured for \$20 million with a company owned by people close to Austria's conservative People's Party, part of what Austrians call "the Right Side of the Empire." Needless to say, if the ship sank, the insurance company and its conservative owners would have to shell out \$20 million and suffer a major net loss.

And the ship did sink—in the Indian Ocean, where the waters are nearly twenty thousand feet deep and salvage operations all but impossible. Most of the *Lucona's* 14 crew members perished but, miraculously, five

men and one woman survived and were eventually picked up by a Turkish steamer. Brought back to the Netherlands, the survivors testified that the ship had been rent by a powerful explosion and had sunk within a few minutes. In Rotterdam, Proksch's lawyers insisted the sinking had been an accident. Perhaps, they said, the ship had collided with a wreck (an impossibility in such deep waters).

Slowly the clouds began to gather over the head of the man who had been prepared to send 12 men and two women to their death. He and his most intimate collaborators were twice briefly arrested and questioned, but the machinery of fraud, including an endless stream of forged documents, along with continuing pressure on the judiciary from the Socialist authorities, conspired to prevent the case from going to trial. Recently a parliamentary committee was formed to investigate the affair. But Proksch, it turned out, was gone. The man who once had the support of a large sector of the mass media is today on the run—probably hiding out in Eastern Europe. Interpol is after him, but with the help of his friends in the East, he may never be brought to justice.

PAINSTAKINGLY researched over many years, *The Lucona Case* documents the mostly illegal and unconstitutional support given to Udo Proksch by Austria's Socialist Party. All of the author's allegations have withstood the closest scrutiny and, not surprisingly, he has yet to be sued for libel. As for what the average Austrian thinks of these revelations, Otto Schulmeister, the doyen of Austrian journalism, remarked rightly that "by now the people consider the connection between politics and crime as normal; a genuine process of fermentation can be observed in the younger generation and we are lucky that the great demagogues are not yet among us." □



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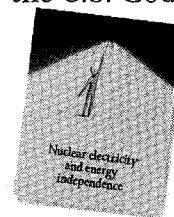
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Nuclear energy means more energy independence.

THE GENEROSITY GAP AND OTHER SCANDALS

WE WERE TOLD at the beginning of the Reagan years that the burden for meeting social needs would shift more to "the private sector." That was the wrong terminology, of course. It implies that "public" is synonymous with "governmental." Mr. Reagan should have said that the burden would shift to public institutions that are non-governmental and voluntary. The Administration further confused the issue by its frequent boast that it was spending more on social programs than had ever been spent before. Thus the Reagan team, eager to prove that it had heart, accepted the criterion for caring propagated by its more determined opponents.

The idea that the voluntary sector could share more of the burden was derided by social-welfare agencies, and not least of all by the old-line churches. In fact, giving and volunteer work did rise when the word went out that the government was not going to do everything. Various studies have demonstrated the unsurprising truth that government spending tends to crowd out voluntary giving. Why should I feed the hungry, visit the sick, or house the homeless if I am assured that, if I don't do it, the government will? Such issues related to voluntary and government action are explored in Charles Murray's new book, *In Pursuit: Of Happiness and Good Government* (Simon & Schuster).

Murray notes that the percentage of personal income given to help others rose steadily during the 1950s. In 1964-65, in the midst of an economic boom, the trend reversed. It kept going down until it was reversed again in 1981, when a new Administration seemed to be saying, "If you don't attend to these needs, nobody will."

But it isn't implausible that voluntary giving could generate the funds required to maintain existing government programs. According to Murray,

if the percentage of real personal income given away had followed the trend of the 1950s, Americans in 1985 would have been donating 5.1 per cent of personal income, or \$88.2 billion more than we actually donated. Note that the entire federal package for "public aid" in 1985—including welfare, Medicaid, social services, Supplemental Security Income, training programs, and sundry other efforts—came to \$60 billion. The point is not that all these programs would have been or should have been funded voluntarily. The point is that individuals do give generously to public purposes if they know the government won't.

Murray does not deal with more recent Census Bureau data indicating that the relatively poor are much more generous than the relatively and the really rich. Families with incomes under \$15,000 give away twice as much, in percentage terms, as families with incomes over \$100,000, although the latter obviously can better afford to be generous. Many of the truly rich give less than a tithe on a tithe and fancy themselves philanthropists. It is said that the rich get rich by not giving away their money. But that makes no sense in theory, and in fact there are numerous counter-examples of those who are both rich and generous. The niggardly rich are only depriving themselves of the satisfactions of doing good, and depriving our public life of the diversity of initiatives that depend on non-government funding.

The generosity gap between the rich and the non-rich is one reason why many people like the idea of the government extracting income according to ability to pay. It strikes them as only fair. That version of fairness, however, tends to overlook the questionable justice of coercing money from others in order to fund our good intentions. Extreme libertarians to the contrary, a measure of such coercion,

also known as taxation, is necessary in any society. But an exclusive, or even dominant, dependence upon taxes in meeting social needs has deeply debilitating consequences. It excludes the sense of self-respect and responsibility that comes through participation in helping others. It encourages indifference and self-centeredness: "Don't bother me. I gave at the IRS." And it makes almost inevitable the bloating of government programs only marginally related to the good intentions they were designed to serve.

IT IS ODD that so many church leaders are enamored of taxation and disdainful of voluntary giving. It is odd because churches are totally dependent on voluntary giving. It is also odd because churches and other voluntary institutions are increasingly deprived of their societal functions by government programs. For example, one church hunger program regularly promotes the proposition that \$100 given to its political lobbying can produce \$1 million of government money for the hungry. Following the logic, we arrive at the point where the vestigial function of the churches is to provoke government action. When people discover other lobbies with greater leverage, it would seem that the churches would no longer be necessary. Some of us cannot shake the impression that Christian concern for the needy is supposed to be something more elevated than getting the government to spend more money.

In 1981 Ronald Reagan called for more participation by the voluntary sector. The call made some difference. Perhaps the Bush Administration will combine that call with an imaginative redesign of social policy that builds on the strengths, including the generosity, of a people "in pursuit of happiness and good government." □

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BOOKS ARTS & MANNERS

OUT OF CONTROL

Peter Brimelow

OSCAR WILDE in a famous phrase described fox-hunting as the unspeakable in full pursuit of the uneatable. Something similar might be said about the spectacle of the media establishment in full cry on behalf of former *New York Times* man Neil Sheehan's ponderous account of John Paul Vann, a key U.S. official in Vietnam who was killed in a helicopter accident days after masterminding the crushing defeat of Hanoi's 1972 Easter Offensive in the Central Highlands. Excerpted in *The New Yorker*, winner of the National Book Award, a best-seller for 15 weeks already at this writing, *A Bright Shining Lie* has attracted an extraordinary pack of articles yelping about what Sheehan has called his "16-year odyssey" in writing the book, and whimpering discreetly of the severe emotional cost to his martyred self and his family.

As of early 1989, a search of the major media revealed not one single negative review. True, several reviewers showed telltale signs of having read attentively little further than the book's dramatic opening scene—Vann's funeral at Arlington National Cemetery, attended both by Nixon Cabinet officers and by antiwar pooh-bahs like Daniel Ellsberg and Edward Kennedy. Sheehan, who likes a portentous cliché, has described this scene as the burial of "the whole era of confidence that Henry Luce has so boastfully called 'the American century.'"

The reviews also showed a distinct tendency to discuss not the book, but Vann's character. ("Finally consumed by his own illusions"—Laurence Zuckerman, *Time* magazine; "in the grip of a compulsion"—Ronald Steel, *New York Times Book Review*; "degenera-

tion . . . into a stubborn liar and bloody-minded war lover"—Jeff Danziger, the *Christian Science Monitor*.) Vann, it appears, was guilty of serious deviationism: he did not follow the journalists he had cultivated so assiduously during the early 1960s when he was a military advisor to the South Vietnamese army—most importantly David Halberstam and Sheehan himself—into their subsequent open opposition to the war. In a close race, the *Christian Science Monitor*'s Danziger has probably won the Thundering Inanity Prize: men like Vann, he sermonizes, "thought there were problems that could be solved by killing." General Giap, needless to say, thought problems could be solved by giving birth.

So much for the unspeakable. What

A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam, by Neil Sheehan (Random House, 861 pp., \$24.95)

of the uneatable? The truth can be simply stated. Sheehan's book is technically, intellectually, and morally incompetent. Its uncritical reception is a devastating condemnation of the American intelligentsia. In itself, it goes far toward explaining why the cause of freedom was defeated in Vietnam.

To begin with the least important: at 861 pages, *A Bright Shining Lie* suffers from gross, appalling elephantiasis. By comparison, Lytton Strachey was able to dispose of General Gordon, in many ways a Victorian version of John Paul Vann, in less than an eighth of the space.

A crude political motive can be detected behind certain of Sheehan's shenanigans. He devotes six pages to the drama of whether Vann's peacenik son will decide to disrupt his father's funeral by pressing his torn draft card upon President Richard Nixon (answer: no); a mere thirty pages to the entire course of the war from the Tet Offensive in 1968 to the Easter Offensive in 1972; and nothing—repeat, *nothing*—to the three years between Vann's death and Hanoi's final onslaught in 1975. Thus, "one of the few brilliant histories of the American entanglement in Vietnam" (David Shi, *New York Times*) shabbily contrives to evade the historical reality that Saigon ultimately fell, not because its troops ceased to fight—they fought to the end, without benefit of American media coverage—but because the United States reneged on its commitment to supply the modern means to fight.

In the end, however, it emerges that there is simply no point at all to much of Sheehan's narrative. The 1963 "battle" of Ap Bac, involving

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only 350 Vietcong, receives more attention than any other engagement of the war, apparently for little better reason than that Sheehan was there (he did no reporting in Vietnam after being transferred to Washington in mid 1966). The harrowing experiences in captivity of one of Vann's aides are recounted in detail for a while but then trail off without resolution; it seems that they are included only because Sheehan obtained a copy of the man's unpublished account of his ordeal. Even before reading press stories about the ninety thousand words Sheehan had to cut from his manuscript at the last moment and his desperate scramble (after 16 years!) to complete and fax the *New Yorker* excerpt as the magazine was going to press, the truth is painfully clear: Sheehan just plain lost control of his material.

This technical failing leads into Sheehan's crucial intellectual failing: In a peculiar parody of General William Westmoreland, the U.S. commander in Vietnam, Sheehan substitutes immense diffuse force for specific inciseness. The difference is that Westmoreland's method of blind attrition was at least intended to produce an American victory.

It is possible to make a case that U.S. interests did not require intervention in Vietnam. But quite apart from such geopolitical questions, the war posed practical military problems that Sheehan nowhere clearly explains. The peculiar geography of South Vietnam meant that Saigon had not only to defend a frontier eighty miles long but had to do so on exterior lines, an almost impossibly difficult task. The obvious solution was either to invade North Vietnam or at the very least to occupy Cambodia and Laos to the Mekong River, establishing the short, defensible frontier along a DMZ extended due west. But Washington refused to contemplate these options. Throughout the war, the North Vietnamese were able to import matériel from the Communist bloc through Haiphong Harbor, transship it down the Ho Chi Minh Trail parallel to the South Vietnamese border, and maintain sanctuaries in Cambodia within fifty miles of their enemy's capital. The United States and its allies were fighting with one arm tied behind their back—a posture they were able to maintain only because the United

RANDOM NOTES

□ MORE MARCH TITLES: *The Pentagonists: An Insider's View of Waste, Mismanagement, and Fraud in Defense Spending* (Houghton Mifflin, \$19.95), by A. Ernest Fitzgerald, is a timely volume combining personal experience with hard research. The author, who was fired from his job as cost analyst at the Pentagon in 1970, asserts that the order came from President Nixon, in retaliation for Fitzgerald's refusing to keep mum on the topic of wasteful practices in the military. In describing collusive activities between the Pentagon, defense contractors, and some members of Congress, Fitzgerald does not hesitate to name names and cite specifics.

Who, in the early months of 1989, remembers Paul Simon? Well—Paul Simon; that's who. In *Winners and Losers: the 1988 Race for the Presidency, One Candidate's Perspective* (Continuum, \$17.95), the senator from Illinois mugwumpishly gripes that the Iowa and New Hampshire

primaries are too influential, that presidential campaigns go on *too long*, and that in 1988 the richest candidates won the nominations and the nastier of the two won the Presidency, which he had disgraced long before he actually assumed its mantle. In this sordid, Maileresque nightmare of the American soul, Simon seems to believe, the only light was provided by the shining conscience of the Reverend Jesse Jackson.

The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs (Harper & Row, \$25), by David Pryce-Jones, is an historical indictment of the development of the Arab nations since they won their independence earlier in this century. The Arabs, Pryce-Jones argues, failed to establish progressive democracies of the Western stripe because of their Muslim religion and their traditional patterns of kinship and tribalism.

In *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (Houghton Mifflin, \$24.95), Modris Eksteins brilliantly states a connection between modernist thought after World War I and the development of protofascist ideologies during the postwar era. —CW

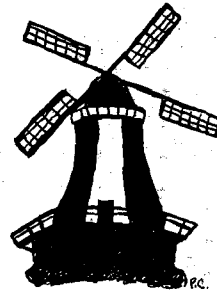
States' arm was so extraordinarily powerful.

How did this incredible situation come about? In 861 pages, Sheehan makes only a few vague allusions to the problem, usually in the context of Washington's alleged fear of direct Chinese or Soviet intervention.

Sheehan is almost equally impetrable on the professional disputes between Vann and the American high command. This is particularly unfortunate because it means he never has to confront directly a curious paradox. In the early stages of the war, Vann apparently wanted the Americans to take over the direction of the South Vietnamese army in detail, to function like a classic colonial power. But Sheehan maintains dogmatically that it was precisely the taint of "collaborating" with French colonialism—his use of the World War II term is no accident; another favorite word is "quisling"—that made an alliance with Saigon unacceptable to pure-hearted Vietnamese patriots. Either Sheehan—and Vann's other journalistic allies—never thought through the implications of Vann's prescription, or they just chose to ignore it while using his critical diagnosis of American policy for their own antiwar purposes.

Similarly, in the later stages of the war, as the attack increasingly became a conventional invasion by North Vietnamese troops, Vann opposed Westmoreland's search-and-destroy operations in the deserted interior mountains and proposed that U.S. forces instead concentrate on controlling and "pacifying" the populated areas, mostly on the coastal plain. A close reading of Sheehan's text suggests that Vann might have regarded Westmoreland's determination to accept battle in whatever prepared position the North Vietnamese chose to offer it as an uneconomical use of force, but it's hard to tell. And presumably Westmoreland could have objected that Vann's approach would leave the North Vietnamese units intact, able to attack the South Vietnamese in the populated areas and force them either to retreat or to make last-ditch defensive stands. This was exactly what happened in 1972 (win) and 1975 (loss). Sheehan's 861 pages of "brilliant" history offer no clue to any of this.

One reason for Sheehan's vagueness becomes apparent in his treatment of the air war. Accepting as usual the antiwar polemics of the time, he asserts baldly that bombing cannot paralyze a country at war. He does not, of



course, inquire why Washington, having decided to substitute attrition for strategy, nevertheless refrained from the systematic razing of populated areas, as in World War II, let alone from bombing the Red River dikes and washing North Vietnam into the sea. But even more significant is the question, raised most recently in Colonel Jack Broughton's remarkable *Going Downtown: The War against Hanoi and Washington* (Crown/Orion), of political over-restriction of the air war. Civilians in a weekly White House lunch ten thousand miles away decided not only targets but detailed tactics. Pilots were not even allowed to attack SAM sites unless their planes were fired on first.

Sheehan does not reject this argument: he shows absolutely no awareness of it, nor of any of the sources cited by Broughton, such as the 1967 Stennis Committee report and British diplomat John Colvin's testimony that Hanoi was on the verge of collapse in that year until rescued by another round of Washington's pointless bombing pauses. And this suggests that Sheehan's loss of control of his material includes a grave failure to keep up with the field, especially when new work was disturbing to his simple antiwar faith. Although his bibliography cites with a straight face works on European politics by Barbara Tuchman, its selection of books on Vietnam published during the past ten years is suspiciously scrappy, notable omissions including Guenter Lewy's *America in Vietnam* and Colonel Gerald Turley's *The Easter Offensive*.

This sort of vagueness in a "brilliant history" of such pretensions is appalling. Yet it exactly reflects the vagueness endemic in the reporting at the time, as anyone who tried to follow the military situation from a distance will remember. Vagueness, in fact, was crucial to the antiwar cause. It was vital to the undermining of domestic morale that American soldiers appear to be dying, as Sheehan intones in the rhetoric of the era, "in the rain forest of nowhere . . . for no visible purpose and with no conclusion in sight." Similarly, only by keeping attention firmly diverted from the crucial role of the cross-border sanctuaries could the antiwar movement get away with shamelessly describing the Nixon Administration's belated thrusts at them as a "widening of the war," as if the war

were somehow not already in these areas—another rhetorical device retained by Sheehan. The Vietnam experience was not merely a case of *trahison des clercs*, the betrayal of a nation's purpose by its educated classes, but of *tantrum des clercs*. The entire American intelligentsia was in a state of hysteria over the war, shouting slogans to drown out rational discussion and above all refusing to open its eyes to reality. As the reaction to *A Bright Shining Lie* demonstrates, it still is.

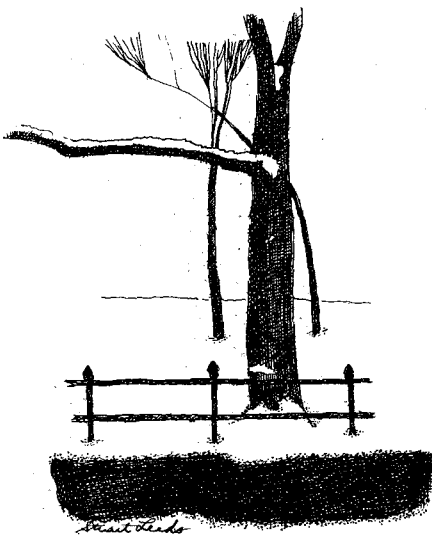
An odd feature of Sheehan's book is that enough facts have survived his emotional selectivity and analytical ineptitude to refute his thesis completely. Thus he admits unhesitatingly that the Vietcong were always a wholly owned subsidiary of North Vietnam, contrary to ardent antiwar assertions at the time. He makes it clear that guerrilla warfare was not some new military magic, as David Halberstam implied in his influential 1965 book *The Making of a Quagmire*, and that it was quickly replaced by conventional main-force action; that Westmoreland's approach, whatever its faults, was indeed wearing down the Communists even before the 1968 Tet Offensive; that Tet was a military disaster for them; that after Tet their grip on the countryside was broken; and that Nixon's 1970 incursion into Cambodia achieved its objective in disrupting North Vietnam's preparations for another offensive. He even notes that American bombing, which Vann originally criticized as too indiscriminate for the detailed war he wanted to fight, did indeed ultimately have the effect of driving the population into government-controlled areas where the

Communist influence could not be sustained.

But Sheehan avoids considering the implications of these facts with perfunctory excuses. Tet was a "psychological defeat" for the United States. "Antiwar protests" soon "forced" Nixon to withdraw from Cambodia. Quite how victory was turned into a "psychological defeat" and a domestic fifth column allowed to frustrate America's objectives even as its soldiers were dying to secure them is never examined.

It is interesting to speculate why Sheehan's "odyssey" turned out this way. Partly at fault is the knowledge and wisdom of this Ulysses. Sheehan has little historical perspective, so he portrays the Communist victory in Vietnam as inevitable, although the examples of Malaya, the Philippines, and South Korea prove the contrary. His anticolonialism prevents him from seeing that it was the exception rather than the rule for European colonial powers to fail to establish friendly successor regimes, and exacerbates his weakness for debatable and emotive comparisons, particularly with the American Revolution (a Vietnamese "collaborating" with the French was "the equivalent of a Tory"). He asserts at length that Ho Chi Minh could have been an "Asian Tito" without ever considering the possibility that he might have been an Asian Castro. He seems to feel that the North Vietnamese should have been appeased just because they were nationalists who were better soldiers than their neighbors. This theory applied in World War II would have ranged the U.S. on the side of the Third Reich.

But beyond this is the fact that Sheehan is an unreconstructed peacenik and a blame-America-firster, of an unusually primitive kind. His account of Vietnam's post-World War II history can be summarized in Orwellian form: Ho Chi Minh good, U.S. bad. Nowhere in his vast tome is there any hint that there is any reason why anyone should not want to be ruled by Communists. Anti-Communism is invariably presented as "simplistic" or "Manichean." Sheehan's response to the Communist mass-murder of some three thousand people in Huế during the Tet Offensive is notably cool: "The killings were as stupid as they were cruel. The massacre gave substance to the fear that a bloodbath would occur



should the Communists ever win the war . . . " The boat people, naturally, are never mentioned.

A new political generation has arisen for whom the Vietnam War is merely a rumor. But for those of us whose youth it pervaded, *A Bright Shining Lie* is a reminder that in some sense the struggle will never end. We will take it to our graves—and in the case of Neil Sheehan, if the God of his forefathers is to be relied upon, beyond it. □

FACT AND FAITH

Jacob Neusner

Why Did the Heavens Not Darken? The "Final Solution" in History, by Arno J. Mayer (Pantheon, 492 pp., \$27.95)

The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust, and German National Identity, by Charles S. Maier (Harvard, 239 pp., \$22.50)

THESE TWO BOOKS are brilliant, profound—and utterly irrelevant. Though addressing themselves to events of the past, they pose questions deriving from present-day politics, the answers to which have no bearing whatever upon those events but only on the way we perceive them. It is hard to imagine a field of learning so askew as historical study today, which examines what was, not in order to tell us what happened, or even to explain what now is, but to tell us what should be. Such historical positivism claims to settle questions not of fact but of value, purpose, meaning. And that intellectual enterprise is bankrupt. Let me explain.

Arno Mayer and Charles Maier, both historians of modern Europe, both in the highest ranks of their profession, here undertake that kind of rethinking of historical paradigms that is called revisionism. Each asks fresh questions of familiar facts, the point being to direct our attention to facts not earlier seen as important and thus to reshape our understanding of the past. So far so good. But there is a deeper issue here, and it is not a historical one at all.

In rethinking the destruction of most of the Jews of continental Europe between 1933 and 1945, both historians

THE PROCESS of American politics can seem remote and complex. Just ask Texas Congressman Richard Arney.

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At that point Mr. Arney knew very little about the workings of

Washington. "I had no idea how they did what they did, but I knew I wasn't happy with what I was getting."

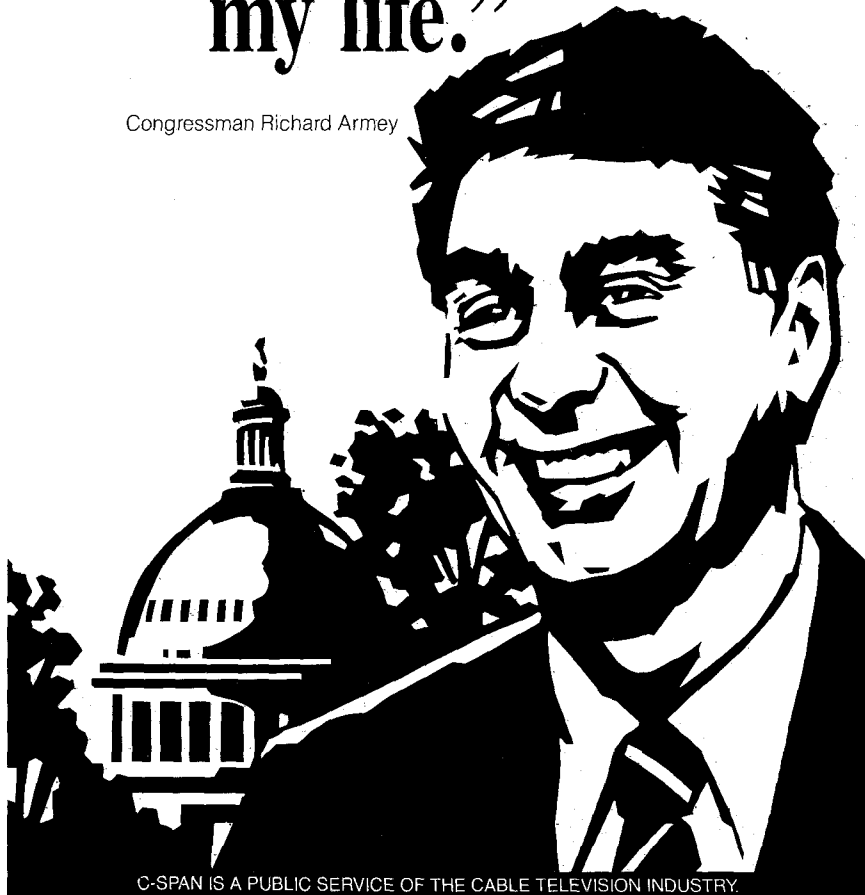
Regular C-SPAN viewing helped. "I watched everything I could," he says. "My wife used to think I had Saturday night wrestling on, because I would talk back to the television."

"And I began to feel a more intimate relationship to the process. I began to understand that these folks weren't bigger than life, and that, in fact, most of them weren't bigger than me."

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"C-SPAN changed my life."

Congressman Richard Arney



ask questions pertinent not so much to the events of that time as to the received interpretation of those events. Most people today see the annihilation of European Jewry as having been integral to the Nazi platform from the beginning. Arno Mayer, however, distinguishes the Nazis' virulent anti-Semitism from the call for genocide. More to the point, he places that genocide within the larger context of European history—a context in which it is no longer, as is claimed, “unique”: similar circumstances in history have produced similar events. Charles Maier also dismisses the claim of uniqueness, understanding that the claim serves acutely contemporary purposes of policy and polemic.

Mayer argues three propositions: first, that “Nazi Germany’s dual resolve to acquire living space in the East and liquidate the Soviet regime provided the essential geopolitical, military, and ideological preconditions for the Judeocide”; second, that the catastrophe should be seen in the historical context of its time; third, that the Nazi regime, the Eastern campaign, and the Judeocide form “integral components and expressions of the General Crisis and Thirty Years War of the twentieth century.”

From this, he argues that Judeocide was not inevitable. Originally, the Nazis had intended only to deport the Jews: “As long as the Wehrmacht . . . [was] triumphant, the suffering of the Jews was limited to this victimization by German security forces and local collaborationist vigilantes.” Systematic mass murder was precipitated only by the failure of the Eastern campaign: “Hitler’s ideologically and politically grounded decision to turn the failing war-cum-crusade against Soviet Russia and Bolshevism into a ferocious struggle for *Sein oder Nichtsein* (life or death) entailed the pitiless torment of the Jews.” And again: “The Judeocide erupted and was systematized in this context of monstrous death and destruction, and it was carried out in a setting and atmosphere weighted down with the miseries of war.”

But here is where historical study falls over into theological advocacy. Because the mass murder of the Jews stands in relationship to “the singular historical context in which it was conceived and executed,” Mayer argues, the “Holocaust” cannot be called historically unique. And since it was not

inevitable, it does not attest to the character of “human nature,” or have anything to say about “all of us”; nor are we dealing with evidence of a divine “hiding of the face,” a *tre-mendum*.

Mayer extends his revisionist argument in his discussion of the non-historical uses of history:

This cult of remembrance of [the Holocaust] has become overly sectarian. More and more, it has helped to disconnect the Jewish catastrophe from its secular historical setting, while placing it within the providential history of the Jewish people to be commemorated, lamented, and restrictively interpreted. Its reification has found expression and consecration in the religiously freighted word-concept “the Holocaust,” a term whose standard meaning is a sacrificial offering wholly consumed by fire in exaltation of God.

Here is the connection between the facts of history and the quest for meaning. For Mayer, events not only instruct, but also impose judgment, allowing us to settle theological questions by appeal to material facts.

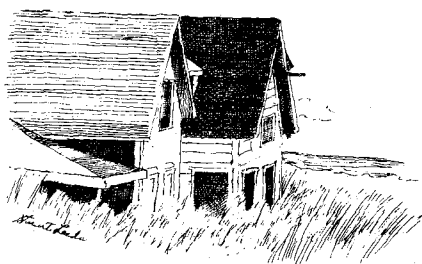
In his treatment of the contemporary German debate over the historical uniqueness of the Holocaust, Charles Maier likewise mixes historical study with philosophical advocacy—with theology in a secular mode. The debate in Germany, after all, concerns not the interpretation of a dead past, but the shaping of the present and future of German politics and culture. In tracing these matters, Maier reflects upon how historical study shapes national identity and ideas of collective responsibility. “Comparability,” he concedes, “cannot really exculpate.” But, even so, “uniqueness is rightly perceived as a crucial issue.” Why does it matter to Germans? Because, “if the Final Solution remains non-comparable . . . the past may never be ‘worked through,’ the future never normalized, and German nationhood may remain forever tainted, like some well forever poisoned.” Quite how all this follows I cannot explain, but, as Maier amply

demonstrates, this is precisely the question at issue in present-day Germany.

That what is at stake is present-day—not historical—politics is shown by the framing of the issue. Jürgen Habermas sees the claim that the German destruction of European Jewry finds its place within the range of other genocides as an effort to “relativize” the event, which he identifies with a new nationalist and conservative search for a usable past. As Maier argues, “All participants have recognized that there can be no discussion of a national community without a confrontation of the darkest aspects of the national past.” So, “the controversy is also about the German future.”

The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau. Both of these books are absolutely first-rate pieces of historical writing: compelling reading, full of important learning, vindications of the historian’s craft. But while putting forth the hands of history, they speak in the voice of policy. And, finally, we have to ask ourselves: So what? Mayer’s brilliant and, I think, completely successful revision of our understanding of the Judeocide in European history helps us better to understand what actually happened. But it bears no moral authority concerning what we are to *make* of those events. The facts of history lie inert; they cannot be made to live simply by being placed upon the stage of contemporary debate. For facts are just what the word means etymologically: things done. They bear no meaning, contain no moral authority, that for our own purposes we do not impute to them. All of these debates, insofar as they address issues not of fact and analysis but of present interpretation of tomorrow’s imperatives, are in an exact sense irrelevant.

Where have we learned to appeal to historical fact in order to settle issues of faith and value? Clearly, from the tradition of nineteenth-century German historicism, which took the view that if only we know exactly what was, we can also say what should be. But the connection between *was* and *should be* hardly emerges from any intrinsic logic. And those facts that we identify as important gain consequence only because we assign it to them. The debates Maier records, the events Mayer traces, bear no implications from the past for an inchoate future. The future



is what, in our conscience and intellect, we decide it should be. History has now to leave the stage of theology and philosophy alike: it has nothing relevant to say to the things that matter. Facts do not settle questions of faith, because faith is not something that the here-and-now dictates. □

BENEFIT OF CLERGY

John Wauck

Wheat That Springeth Green, by J. F. Powers (Knopf, 335 pp., \$18.95)

J. F. POWERS is not a prolific writer. Up until last year, he had produced, in a forty-year career, one novel and three slim collections of stories. Nor is he a writer of great variety. "Powers's stories," wrote Flannery O'Connor in 1958, "can be divided into two kinds—those that deal with the Catholic clergy and those that don't. Those that deal with the clergy are as good as any stories being written by anybody; those that don't are not so good."

That remains a fair assessment. But what Powers's fiction lacks in quantity and diversity, it has made up for in quality, for he has mostly played to his strengths and stuck to priests. His 1962 novel *Morte d'Urban*—a subtle comedy about a year in the life of Father Urban Roche, a worldly priest driven to an ambiguous sort of holiness—demonstrated what Powers's first collection of stories, *The Prince of Darkness*, had suggested. The author's mastery of the clerical perspective, his dead-on ear for priestly dialogue, his quiet wit, and his flair for creating sublime farce all prompted high expectations for Powers's future.

The 26-year gestation of his second novel, *Wheat That Springeth Green*, was interrupted only by the publication in 1975 of another collection of short pieces. Like its predecessor, the new novel tells the story of a Catholic priest in Powers's native Midwest. But unlike Urban Roche, Powers's new hero, Father Joe Hackett, starts out—after a crude and implausible *ménage à trois* in his neighbor's garage at the age of 15—in hot pursuit of a quite unworldly sanctity. Aspiring to a life of contemplation, he becomes in his seminary the leader of a band of like-

minded "spiritual athletes," and even takes to wearing a hair shirt.

Ironically, it is his first parish assignment that punctures his illusions: the demands of parish work and the daunting holiness of his pastor cause Joe to despair of sanctity. He gives himself up to the social demands of his parishioners. Before long he is regularly waking up unsure of exactly when and how he got home.

After a stint as an archdiocesan bureaucrat, he finally gets his own parish (a coup) and a groovy, guitar-playing, Volkswagen-driving curate named Bill (a disappointment). After obligatory frictions, however, the two become friends, and the rest of the novel is the story of Joe's very gradual return to spiritual health.

In the course of the story, perhaps to grind an axe or two gently before signing off, the 71-year-old Powers allows himself, through the mouth of Joe, two formal sermonettes: one on the impossibility of "just war"; the other on what ails today's Catholic Church. The unexpected way in which Powers handles these two issues reveals him to be one of those liberals, nearly extinct by now, who do not

allow their politics to change their view of the nature and purpose of the Church: A distrust of money and bourgeois America colors much of Powers's view of Midwestern life; he describes one monument to mammon at the local Badger shopping mall as if it were a sickening mockery of Catholic paintings of the Sacred Heart of Jesus: "the Great Badger itself, a forty-foot idol—its enlarged, exposed red neon heart beating faintly in the sunlight." Yet, for a socially sensitive pacifist, Joe has some harsh things to say about the tenor of post-Vatican II Catholicism: "All this talk of community, communicating, and so on—it was

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just whistling in the dark. Life's not a cookout by Bruegel and Elder and people know it."

Powers's prose is low-key and economical (he's the sort of writer who slips important plot developments into parenthetical phrases), and the laughs are never loud; his is an art of cumulative comedy. His portrait of parish life is as accurate as ever, though complicated now by the changes of Vatican II. Novelists always face a special challenge in priests—a group of men, neither relatives nor necessarily friends, thrown together not just to do a job but to be and think and feel according to an exacting ideal of personal holiness. Priestly talk can be tortuous. When the proper Christian responses are so familiar that they need hardly be articulated, the normal trajectory of accusation, denial, forgiveness, self-criticism, and rapprochement can be as instantaneous as it sometimes is in marriage. But those genuine Christian responses remain so difficult that one is never sure that they really occur. It is a subtle sort of spiritual one-upsmanship that Powers describes: rectories filled with vague resentments that surface in oblique verbal assaults, possibly innocuous remarks that seem to dare the target to take offense, making him doubt his own charity rather than the charity of the remark.

But the real concern of *Wheat That Springeth Green* is how a trail of failures, near-misses, compromises with evil, and occasional victories vitiated by self-congratulation can add up to a noble life. As Joe puts it to Bill, the priestly life is "not a hundred-yard dash. Not a mile run. . . . It's a sack race." Indeed, although Joe does enjoy a rather sudden release from his drinking problem and rejuvenation toward the end of the novel, his real transformation comes from realizing that it isn't contemplative ecstasy or warm faith but rather humiliating troubles, petty failures, and willing sacrifice that will ultimately forge his sanctification and salvation. The Holy "Cross" is literally the last word of the book—the bottom line.

The book's title, taken from the lyrics to a medieval French carol ("Love is come again like / Wheat that springeth green"), is ostensibly a metaphor for spiritual resurrection, and for the life of the heart, but it might serve too as a metaphor for Powers's work as a writer, for the creative urge,

a love for the arduous task of writing, long thought dead, returned to life. □

ART

ANSELM KIEFER AT MOMA

James Gardner

GIVEN THE aggressive and unabashed Germanness of the Anselm Kiefer retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art, it was fitting that, as I passed through its lugubrious halls, I found myself thinking of those famous words of Luther before the Diet of Worms: "I cannot and I will not retract, for it is neither safe nor advisable to act at variance with one's own conscience."

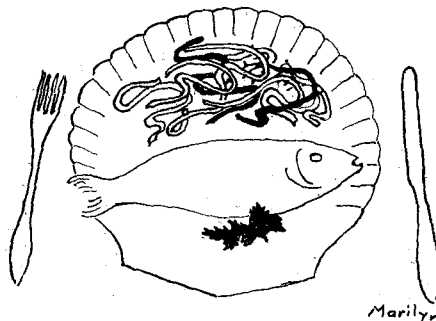
The truth is that we critics have to put up with a great deal of browbeating and intimidation. That this coercion is as subtle as it is constant in no way minimizes its power, causing even the most stalwart critics to wonder if their first and best instincts might just be wrong—causing them, after they have correctly rejected twenty daubers in a row, tentatively to embrace the 21st, for fear that they have become too intolerant and set in their ways. Now, if our compliance helped to erect as stately a structure as St. Peter's in Rome (for it was efforts to fund that project that turned Luther against the Pope), then we would gladly comply. But when the best we can hope for is some paltry mud-hut compounded of straw, dung, and acrylics, like the one Anselm Kiefer recently set up at MOMA, is it not our obligation to revolt?

Yet while the 44-year-old Kiefer scowls across the pages of art publications throughout the world, while he remains belligerently monosyllabic in

interviews, the corps of bowing and scraping critics continue to give him whatever he wants. Even critics who should know better, critics who have meted out to the likes of Schnabel and Salle, Mapplethorpe and Longo, exactly what those artists deserved, have hedged their bets when it came to the truculent mediocrities of Anselm Kiefer. They say that, notwithstanding Kiefer's formal mediocrity, he is a noble, incorruptible spirit; or they claim to despise everything he stands for, but to find themselves unable, in good conscience, to deny his formal competence. What is needed now is for someone to explain that Kiefer a) has nothing to say, and b) says it badly. Well, *hier stehe ich*.

Let us attend first to what Kiefer appears to be saying. "His art reaches something deeply felt in the collective imagination," we learn in the flyer that was offered to viewers of the exhibition, and he does this by "directly confronting recent German history—the War, the Holocaust, the Occupation . . ." He has gained a reputation for being a painter more literate than most, mainly by scribbling across his canvasses sundry spasms of German grammar, impressive only to those who are wholly ignorant of the language. Also imposing are his constant and, to some, obscure allusions to Arminius, Gilgamesh, Yggdrasill, and the Iconoclastic Controversy. In thus attempting to sum up German history, Kiefer has filled his canvasses with expanding vistas of fascist architecture, war-torn cities, Wagnerian stage-sets, and wild fields reminiscent of concentration camps, all merging into one urgent message unto the nations: War is unpleasant, and so am I.

Formally, what is most obvious about these paintings is their heroic bigness. Inspired by Joseph Beuys, Kiefer seems rather to enjoy the charred, scarified, and generally war-torn look, which he successfully imparts to his paintings, drawings, sculpture, and touched-up photographs through a variety of techniques. Over the past twenty years Kiefer has proved to be one of the most protean, or, if you will, one of the most inconstant of artists. His earliest paintings, like *Man in the Forest*, are awash with the same symbolism that characterizes his more recent work; but their togated figures and primeval forests in brown and pale pink are closer to the queasy Art Nou-



veau dreaminess of Ferdinand Knopff.

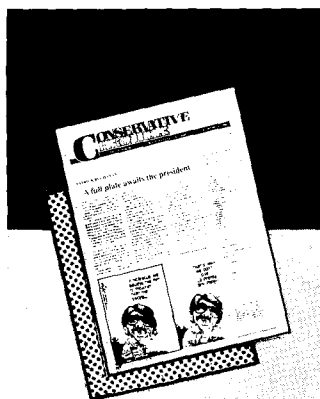
These thin applications of oil to muslin do not continue for very long, however, and by 1974 Kiefer begins to evolve the "ranting" style that will typify most of his subsequent paintings. Though these works are rarely entirely abstract, you often have to seek long and hard to find external references in his seemingly gratuitous clumps of dirt, strips of metal and wood, swathes of straw, and isolated lilies of the valley. *Cockchafer Fly* depicts a furrowed field whose dark, rich soil is represented by the thick application of black paint to burlap. At the very top there is a suggestion of trees and mist, and because we know whom we are dealing with, we immediately imagine that we see an abandoned concentration camp littered with corpses. At the same time, Kiefer has enjoyed making sharp and dramatic perspectives, whether of the medieval mythological type, resembling a set from Wagner's *Siegfried*, or adorned with hulking colonnades, reminiscent of Albert Speer, that seem to

crumble and peel away under the unbearable weight of their own internal rottenness. In addition, Kiefer is the author of "books," all of whose pages are coated in black or amber mud, as well as of doctored photographs of the sea, and of a myriad other distractions to describe which would be onerous to critic and reader alike.

So let us turn back, instead, to the almost incredible sophism that characterizes the esteem in which the ductile art viewer has come to hold Anselm Kiefer. Suppose, for argument's sake, that form and content are equally relevant to the success of a work of art. Now Kiefer's message, his content, seems to me too inarticulate, too plitudinous to be taken seriously: but let us charitably say that it is "mediocre." As for the formal elements of his paintings, there is not a one among them that has not been seen before in the works of Masson, Klein, de Kooning, Beuys, and about ten other mainstream European artists of the last quarter-century, and often the conjunctions of these borrowings are not new

either. Yet Kiefer has a certain minor flair for compositions and juxtapositions of colors: let us rate them, too, as "mediocre." Now if I say to his admirers that his message (Germanism, the War, the collective unconscious, and all that) is mediocre and has been heard before, they will answer that he has managed to ennoble it through the integrity of his art. "Yes," I will then protest, "but his art is crude and amateurish compared with those from whom he borrows." And they will say: "But he is not just interested in creating pretty pictures! He has the weight of the German conscience upon his shoulders, and he has struggled to express it in terms that are intentionally crude, that do not cater to the effete, bourgeois appetites of aesthetes."

Alas, the dog will be chasing its tail for some time, until it receives different commands from a different master whom it will then obey with equal and total docility. In the catalogue, Mark Rosenthal, the show's curator, repeats what we all know, that Hitler wanted to be a painter. What is more inter-



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THE RIGHT BOOKS / CHILTON WILLIAMSON JR.

I RECENTLY SPENT a guilty Saturday, when I ought to have been skiing, reading *U.S. Ends and Means in Central America: A Debate* (Plenum Publishing, 233 Spring Street, New York, N.Y. 10013; \$19.95), by Ernest van den Haag and Tom J. Farer. Although like most debates this one seems to have been ultimately frustrating for both parties ("Professor Farer Cannot Be Persuaded: I Should Have Known"), the event is highly entertaining, even satisfying, for the reader: real suspense comes from trying to foresee how Mr. Farer will defend a seemingly indefensible proposition or assumption, and even more from anticipating Mr. van den Haag's counterattack. In the present confrontation, Farer (a professor of law and international relations at the American University in Washington, D.C.) is cast in the role of the establishment expert under fire from a freewheeling common-sense intellectual able to see the wood as well as the trees. For Professor Farer, who comes across in the exchange as a humane and rather charming man (as well as a good writer), the world is an exquisite rational construction in which violence operates as an unnatural force; for van den Haag, it is more or less controlled chaos, in which whatever order exists depends mainly upon violence, or a willingness to use it. At the end, when all has been said, each of the participants appears still to be mystified by the other's premises, while the reader—this reader anyhow—is aware of having had distilled for him the essence of two broadly opposed points of view.

Farer's argument, succinctly stated in conclusion by the professor himself, is as follows:

The real policy issue is how to choose in a world where, in the nature of things, we can know so little about cause and effect. One of the guidelines I have implicitly proposed is that, at least in cases that do not involve threats to the supreme strategic interests of the country, we should limit ourselves to means and ends sanctioned by a broad international consensus. A second is that, as an enormously successful nation—where the population enjoys a level of physical comfort, of security from external attack, and of freedom with few parallels in

human history—the United States should employ means tending to enhance restraints on the use of force in international relations.

To which van den Haag responds simply:

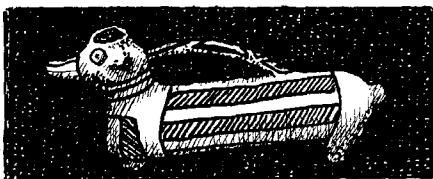
The aim of our foreign policy must be, in the first place, to provide for our security by preventing the expansion of pro-Soviet forces, and, in Central America, to enforce the Monroe Doctrine. We can support human rights, but basically they can be instituted only by the citizens of the country in which they are to prevail. We cannot remove the Soviet government. We can probably prevent the consolidation of a Communist government in Nicaragua. We allowed it to consolidate itself in Cuba. We originally supported the Sandinistas, as we did Castro. We need not continue to repeat our mistakes.

Van den Haag believes that we should continue to support the Contras, at a cost he estimates at about \$100 million a year; Farer believes that to do so puts us on the wrong side of "international law," of which his opponent flatly denies the existence. ("Tom Farer has been for many years a professor of law. . . . It seems only natural that he sincerely believes that international law 1) exists, 2) should play an important role in foreign policy, and 3) is a useful guide for policy toward the civil war in Nicaragua and El Salvador. But he is wrong on all three counts.") Arguing that "words have no true meaning" (!), Farer defines international "law" (a term he himself sets in quotation marks on at least one occasion) as a "system of reciprocal obligation" that influences the behavior of states; while van den Haag, dismissing that system as no more than an international convenience, to be adhered to or flouted by individual nations as they find it in their interest to do so, concludes flatly: "There can be no law superior to, and

regulative of, the laws a sovereign nation gives itself, no law except its own, to regulate its behavior toward others." On this issue, Professor Farer plainly seeks refuge in the Cave of Aeolus, whence Professor van den Haag is unable to extract him.

Farer, who begins moderately enough, by the end of the book sounds like one of Paul Hollander's "political pilgrims." His description of the Sandinistas' agenda, and of Nicaragua under their regime, is nothing less than astounding. Has Professor Farer—who in respect of other subjects appears to have read almost everything—never looked at the refugee literature produced by such writers as Humberto Belli, Jaime Chamorro, and Arturo Cruz? Has he never picked up a copy of Timothy Ashby's *The Bear in the Back Yard*—a comprehensive account of Soviet expansionism in the Caribbean basin? Could any man who had done so subscribe his name to the following remarks: "What ideology do [the Sandinistas] have other than nationalism and a loose syncretic sort of Marxism?"; "The Sandinista leadership is neither fanatically doctrinaire nor furiously vengeful"; "Nicaragua under a consolidated Sandinista regime experiencing normal diplomatic and commercial relations with the United States is more likely than El Salvador, Honduras, or Guatemala to evolve into a society where the population enjoys human rights at a level approaching that found in the United States and other capitalist democracies"? Is it any wonder that, faced with buncombe such as this, Professor van den Haag is driven on occasion to sarcasm? I should have been driven to drink, myself.

Ultimately, means and ends are so snarled up and tangled together in Professor Farer's mind that he can think of no solution to the Central American imbroglio beyond "relinquishing our obsession with victory and replacing it with the linked goals of tranquilizing Central America and reigniting regional economic growth." For Professor van den Haag, the solution—refreshingly "simplistic" in nature—looks to the motto of the American frontier: "Be sure you're right, then go ahead." □



E.P. Powell

esting and less well known is that many painters want to be dictators, and that they often get their wish. □

FILM

THE FRENZIED AND THE FROZEN

John Simon

SOME MOVIES, however defective, have success built into them. A picture such as *Mississippi Burning*, provided only that it does not shy away from violence—which, Lord knows, it doesn't—cannot but make a killing. To see sheeted or unsheeted rednecks beating, burning, and lynching away is irresistible to viewers outside the South (and perhaps also inside), and pyromaniacs should get their money's worth from the plethora of burning homes, schools, and churches crumbling rafter by lingered-on rafter. And then there is the cops-and-robbers story of how Ward, a prim FBI agent, and Anderson, a hearty former Mississippi sheriff, crack the murder case of three (here unnamed) civil-rights workers: the black James Chaney and the white Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman.

The film can be judged on three levels: as a thriller, as history, and as a human-interest story, what with the stiff Northerner Ward going strictly by the book and the easy-going down-home Anderson proceeding by folksy, unorthodox methods, as—once again!—two mismatched buddies come to respect and care about each other. For added human interest, there is even a platonic flirtation between Anderson and Mrs. Pell, a beautician and wife of Deputy Sheriff Pell, one of the men who murdered the civil-rights workers. It is Mrs. Pell who—at grave risk to herself, but because Anderson treats her so much better than her scurvy husband does—reveals the whereabouts of the three corpses, and so makes possible the victory of justice.

On the historic level, *Mississippi Burning* is mostly fabrication; for example, the way the FBI found the corpses was by paying an informant \$30,000. Time was when such vital information cost only thirty pieces of silver, but 1,000 per cent inflation

over two thousand years is understandable. If this remark sounds flip, let me say that thinking about this movie—as opposed to viewing it, when it is perfectly possible to get sucked in—invites flipness. Thus the film shows Southern blacks in 1964 as patient victims, a sea of angelically anonymous faces, not in the least involved in their own liberation. Equally unhistoric is the presence of blacks in the FBI at that time, and more besides.

As a human-interest story, the film is not appreciably better. Anderson's warmth is conveyed mostly by his treating Mrs. Pell as a lady and not pawing her, and by handling the so-called law enforcers like scum and grabbing one of them by his testicles. But are we to believe that this is enough to get the woman to betray her husband and upbringing, and to stop the sheriff's boys (or the KKK) from gunning Anderson down, especially since he keeps laying himself open to such an exercise in marksmanship? And how are we to care about Ward at all, given that we never find out more about him than that he used to be in the Justice Department and was shot in the shoulder when "with Meredith at Ole Miss"? And how can our fine Anderson say good-bye to the severely husband-battered Mrs. Pell in her ravaged home (retaliation for her squealing) and not even offer to help clean up?

But as a thriller, the film has elementally effective moments, thanks to Chris Gerolmo's explosive script and Alan Parker's detonating direction. Parker knows the shortest way to the viewer's gut, having been a leading British TV-commercial director. He jabs again and again from the very outset: adjoining drinking fountains, one labeled "White," one "Colored"; a white man drinks from the first, followed by a little black child drinking from the second. Next, a backwoods church is seen burning in such detail as Nero would have enjoyed accompanying, though here we get Mahalia Jackson singing a spiritual on the soundtrack. Then, in silhouette, lowly-looking graves. Now we are ready for the murder of the CORE workers.

Since no one living knows or will

tell how it happened, the event had to be imagined. And what could be more alarming than to see in extreme long-shot a car being pursued along a nocturnal country road by another vehicle whose headlights are turned off? The whole scene is imbued with precise nightmarishness, but the detail of the lightless pursuers gaining on the lighted victims is etched in unshakable horror. All of the early scenes work at least on the gut level, but the film starts losing points as it stops making sense, as when Ward, in a crowded noon-time coffee shop, sits down at the back with a young black man and starts pumping him. The man silently moves away, but is nevertheless beaten to a pulp a bit later. Ward simply couldn't be that stupid and careless.

Still, Parker delivers some thorough Grand Guignol even when he ascribes preposterous methods to the FBI. What he should never do is sermonize. So when the town's mayor, who is not a Klansman, commits suicide, Ward enlightens a puzzled assistant: "He was guilty, just as guilty as the lunatics who pulled the triggers. Maybe we all are." Bathetic as this little preachment is, it was originally more extensively and grandiosely homiletic; Parker prints it all in the press kit, along with his intense regret at having had to cut it.

As Ward, Willem Dafoe plays a colorless part impassively; Gene Hackman, as Anderson, is in top form, convincingly Southern in his bluntness and pawkiness even when the material or his accent abandons him. Frances McDormand is first-rate as Mrs. Pell, able to wrest grandeur from weariness without resorting to trickery. Brad Dourif, as her husband, conveys chillingly the wretched insecurity behind evil, illustrating the story Anderson tells Ward about his own father, who once, without compunction, killed the mule of his hard-working black neighbor. The animal gave the man an economic advantage, and "If you ain't better than a nigger, who you better than?" If there were more of this stinging insight and less grandstanding, *Mississippi Burning* would not be in such desperate need of a mule.

The film does, however, have starkly imposing work from the British



cameraman Peter Biziou, who served in the same capacity on *A World Apart*. Can this age of specialization have produced a specialist in racial-violence cinematography?

OVER THE vociferous bafflement of some of the fancier members of the New York Film Critics' Circle, *The Accidental Tourist*, then still unreleased, limped off with the Best Film award and, unusually, no award in any other category. Nevertheless, Lawrence Kasdan's movie, from his and Frank Galati's screenplay based on Anne Tyler's book, is not without its minor, almost marginal, virtues, not to mention the serious merit of being aimed at adults, not overgrown or undergrown juveniles. In its tight, perhaps excessive, restraint, it is the polar opposite of *Mississippi Burning*, and would deserve praise for that alone.

Miss Tyler's novel, which the adaptation follows closely, is high-minded schlock, but at least does not yield a film catering to any of the prevailing forms of tasteless craving, whether for the dialectics of yuppiedom or the metaphysics of the car chase. The main plot concerns Macon Leary, whose solid upper-crust Baltimore marriage to Sarah crumbles after the murder of their young son during an out-of-control holdup. Macon is a writer of travel books for accidental tourists, Americans who on business trips abroad—like himself on the journey through life—want to feel that they never left home. Accidental, too, is Macon's broken leg, caused by a panicky leap of his frightened corgi, Edward.

While his leg is in a cast, Macon moves into the Learys' ancestral home, shared by his spinster sister Rose, who alphabetizes the groceries in the pantry, and by two bachelor brothers even stodgier than Macon. But Edward must be taught some manners and is taken for lessons in canine comportment to Muriel, an extremely unconventional divorcée who lets her feelings hang out like laundry in Naples, and who, while teaching Edward how to behave himself, undertakes to teach his owner how not to. There is also a subplot in which Julian, Macon's spirited publisher, falls for and marries Rose, with seriocomic results.

Much about *The Accidental Tourist* is either too cramped and ossified—as is the nature of the tale—or, if dealing

with Muriel, somewhat preciously eccentric. It is a film dealing in extremes, with very little in between, yet often seeming so low-keyed as if it were all in between. All the same, it deals with adult problems far more compellingly than its only recent American competitor, Woody Allen's stupefyingly contrived *Another Woman*. Above all, Kasdan's work manages not to look and feel like that of a Bergman epigone, no small achievement in American moviemaking, where an authentically grown-up voice seems hard to come by.

It is unfortunate that the best performances come in supporting roles, from Bill Pullman as a genuinely three-dimensional Julian, and Amy Wright, whose quirkiness is unforced throughout. And, as Edward, there is Bud, the relatively rare canine actor who suggests that he might have studied with Stanislavsky. (Three other Cardigan corgis acted as stand-ins, but the triumph is Bud's.) William Hurt, Kathleen Turner, and especially Geena Davis (it's not easy to incarnate the life force) are all a shade overexplicit; but John Bailey's cinematography is a wonder of many-shaded restraint: a subdued palette that nevertheless encompasses a host of gradations. His camera is like fine furniture polish to the old mahogany of these surroundings and lives: it does more than just show, it reveals. □

DELECTATIONS

EXPERIENCING NIKA

Priscilla L. Buckley

OUR APPOINTMENT was for 12:30 at Nicola Paone's, then as now the favorite restaurant of NATIONAL REVIEW's editors. It was 1965, and *NR* had decided to publish a food-and-wine column ("Delectations") that would alternate with Alec Waugh's travel column. James Beard had recommended that we ask Nika Standen Hazelton, a star in the New York food world, to write the column. She and I were to discuss it over lunch.

The initial amenities concluded, Nika took over the meeting. She told me in no uncertain terms what she would and would not do for us. It was



mostly would-nots: She would *not* laud an inferior restaurant, or praise a bad wine. She would *not* pull her punches. She would *refuse* any assignment she deemed unsuitable. In addition, the payment we had suggested was *unacceptable*. Then she smiled. Nika is imposing, a handsome, statuesque Nordic blonde, who comes over more Brünnhilde than Tinker Bell, but when she smiles one tends to melt.

I was captivated. I liked her toughness and her style, and the underlying humor of her conducting the interview when it was we who were the buyers and she the seller. I agreed to her terms—unconditional surrender. Dealing with Nika, I could tell, would never be boring, and I suspected that her column would be as fresh and as ebullient as its author. I was right on both counts. Bosses have never scared Nika, as she recounts in *Ups and Downs: Memoirs of Another Time* (Harper & Row, \$19.95). In Geneva in the early Thirties, as an apprentice reporter covering the reparation talks, the young Nika was befriended by Aristide Briand, head of the French reparations delegation, who bought her a lunch or two. When her editor—elated at this contact—asked her how Briand thought the talks were going, Nika drew herself up haughtily and declared: "I never mix my personal life with business." That she was not fired out of hand is remarkable.

Nika's life has been unorthodox, and so is her autobiography, which is selective in detail and tough-mindedly unemotional, almost as if some of the ups and downs had happened to a third party. If it were not for the captions under the family photographs you would never know that her maiden name was Dittman. Heaven forbid Nika should reveal her birth date. And about her initial separation from her British husband Anthony Standen—known to her more recent friends as

"the awful Anthony"—she says only that he walked away from their marriage after a month. "Anthony decided he could not stand the state of wedded bliss and sent me home to my parents in Milan. I was crushed."

Nika Dittman spent her early childhood in Rome and Milan. Her mother was Italian, her father German, a cultivated and urbane Socialist who served as German consul in Milan during the Weimar years. Their household was run for the master. Otto Dittman's newspaper and his shoelaces were ironed every morning. He would not tolerate deviations from his routine. A lunch table set with paper napkins in a country villa led him to storm out of the house and take the next train back to Milan. When the teenage Nika, at secretarial school in Berlin, once called on him at the Foreign Office arrayed in an Isadora Duncan-like flowing puce garment, he rushed her out of the building, and told her never to wear such clothes in his presence again. "I was very surprised," comments Nika, "I thought I looked charming."

Nika's education was hit-and-miss. She spoke Italian and German at home and was taught French and English early on, but seems not to have attended school after the move to Milan. As a teenager she was sent to a school in Berlin that was in fact little more than a pension. The only other pupil at the school made an indelible impression on Nika by keeping the worms for their fishhooks in her mouth until needed. I've never known anyone else who could do this, says Nika.

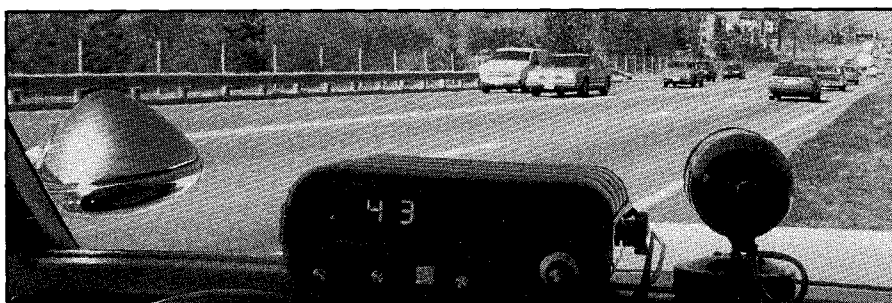
She spent a few months in school in Geneva and a wonderful year at a boarding school in England, where she was astonished at the polite way the English addressed each other. "I was used to being shouted at all the time, and hearing everyone about me shouting in joy or in anger," she observes, and suspects that it is her "not wanting to be English [that] was the reason the English liked me so much." Here—as so often during her schooling—Nika paid her own way, teaching the older girls French, German, and Italian. To support herself while attending the London School of Economics she was forced for a while to work for a fishmonger and to share his wife's bed at night. Her 16-hour work day ended with the washing down of the fish shop. "There is nothing more depress-

ing than the dead look of fish heads," she comments.

Nika's fascination with food is an underlying motif of *Ups and Downs*. She describes in the greatest detail the cookies, sweetmeats, and meals that accompanied the Germanic Christmases of her childhood. She explains how Tyrolean dumplings are made, and what a Berliner's *Kaltes Abendbrot*, or "cold evening bread," consists of. She sings joyously of *marrons glacés*, four

and a half pounds of which she once downed at a sitting.

Why did her mother's kitchen in Rome smell different from her kitchen in Milan? the small Nika wondered. "Only years later," she writes, "did I realize that the basic flavor of any cuisine depends on the fat used in basic food preparations." (In Rome, it was olive oil; in Milan, butter.) Recalling high tea at the fishmonger's leads her to reflect on class differences in



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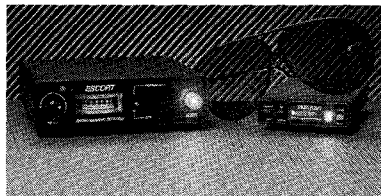
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England and Italy. In England the lower classes eat different foods from the upper classes, in Italy they eat less of the same food, less fancily prepared.

She learned the rudiments of her trade—Nika is first and foremost a journalist, a journalist who happens to write about food—working in the Geneva bureau of the German news agency Wolff covering meetings of the League of Nations, whose ideals, however misplaced, she finds preferable to those propounded in the “giant ice-cream sandwich on New York’s East Side.” But it was at *Fortune* magazine that she honed her skills. In the Thirties, on Luce publications, men were editors and writers, women were restricted to research. While objecting to this long-since-abandoned rule, Nika acknowledges that she “learned more from researching for *Fortune* than from any other job I ever held.” She left *Fortune* in a final and, as it turned out, futile attempt to make a go of her marriage to Anthony Standen, and returned to Europe with him.

Ups and Downs ends as World War II begins. Nika and her first son, the infant Tony, have escaped Italy just ahead of the declaration of war. They and Anthony are sailing to America. “I was happy beyond belief because I knew that I could live for good in the one country in the world that spelled home to me.”

On which euphoric note—and at a point in time fifty years back—Nika brings to a close a major chapter of what this reader hopes is only the first of her autobiographical chronicles. □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Best Laid Plans: The Inside Story of America’s War against Terrorism, by David C. Martin and John Walcott (Harper & Row, 392 pp., \$22.50)

BEST LAID PLANS chronicles the United States’ wins and losses in our recent attempts to counter this war-by-murder that has been waged against us. Written by two respected reporters, David C. Martin of CBS and John Walcott of the *Wall Street Journal*, it pulls together the facts—and occasionally unearths new ones—about such episodes as the aborted 1980 Iran hostage-rescue mission, the retaliatory raid



on Libya, the Iran-Contra affair, and more. These are woven loosely together in a skein of political opinion—on matters such as the Reagan Administration’s anti-Communism, terrorism’s real threat, the wisdom of accepting the professional advice of bureaucrats. Broadly speaking, Martin and Walcott think terrorism is a sickness that is resistant to medication, a political AIDS that the body politic has to tolerate because the cure is too costly. Within a week of his inauguration, President Reagan—having been informed that 1980 had been the biggest year for terrorist attacks on American citizens since 1968, when the government started keeping records—publicly vowed to answer terrorism with “swift and effective retribution”—a pledge the authors wish he had not made. “Ten Americans killed [the toll in 1980, along with 94 injured] was . . . fewer than had been killed by lightning that same year.” From this perspective, little justifies retribution or even response; Iran-Contra was flawed in justification as well as execution; and earlier Administration concerns were over-reactions, or worse. But buried in this analytical lightheadedness is a well-written and carefully researched piece of reporting. Shifting from the war against terrorists to the political circus of Iran-Contra, Martin and Walcott uncover Ollie North’s “real source of power—the ability to work man-killing hours with an intensity that only a true believer could sustain.” North is duly painted as a kook, Poindexter a meritocrat, Reagan a sentimental old pail of tears. Psychological cartoons and thumbnail sketches dominate the analysis of this episode. Now, trading hostages for arms was a mistake. But Reagan’s over-all willingness to use force succeeded. Martin and Walcott, however, do not admit that. They think we’ve exaggerated the threat, and should resign ourselves to containing rather than destroying it. They think that law may be “the indispensable weapon” against terrorists. But support-

ers of international terror are more impressed by the threat of a naval air strike or of deadly force in general than by a legion of subpoena-waving lawyers. This is because—contrary to the authors’ final and least tenable conclusion—terrorism is a threat not merely to law and order, but to national security itself. SETH CROPSEY

I’ll Tell You a Story, I’ll Sing You a Song: A Parents’ Guide to Fairy Tales, Fables, Songs, and Rhymes of Childhood, by Christine Allison (Delacorte, 240 pp., \$15.95)

WHEN PEOPLE who like to read become parents, they anticipate happy evenings round the fireplace rereading childhood favorites and discovering books they unaccountably missed or were born too late for. Christine Allison, though clearly a wide-ranging and enthusiastic reader of children’s fare, reminds other young parents that there is a tradition older than that of the printed word—the oral tradition. *I’ll Tell You a Story, I’ll Sing You a Song* is meant to be read by parents, but not to children. Mrs. Allison collects many of the most popular fairy tales, songs, and rhymes, and uses them to teach book readers and TV watchers how—and when—to tell a story or sing a song. Her book begins with fairy tales—short, simple versions of the Grimm brothers, Perrault, and Hans Christian Andersen. Scattered among these are pages of advice on storytelling, with headings like “How to Light a Story,” “Ten Steps to a Well-Told Tale,” “The Pregnant Pause and Other Tricks of the Teller’s Tale.” The advice is kind, uncondescending, and easy to act upon. In my own experience and that of other mothers I know, nursery rhymes are easiest to learn and to recite spontaneously, without embarrassment. Songs—especially “serious” lullabies—seem hardest to pull off, perhaps because most people are self-conscious about their singing voices. But readers should let themselves be lured into the music section of Mrs. Allison’s book, with its interesting asides on musical milestones in a young child’s development and a well-researched list of best children’s records. *I’ll Tell You a Story, I’ll Sing You a Song* is a lovely browsing book meant to draw the reader, at least occasionally, beyond books to the spoken word. ELLEN WILSON FIELDING

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WHO IS OLLIE'S PEER?

NEW YORK, FEB. 3

THE BUSINESS of finding 12 jurors in Washington, D.C., who so to speak have never heard of Colonel Oliver North, assumes ludicrous proportions, something like Diogenes' search for an honest man, only what Judge Gerhard Gesell and the defendants appear to be looking for is Twelve Truly Ignorant Washingtonians who will approach the question of Colonel North, guilty or innocent, *tabula rasa*—with absolutely unformed opinions.

In the dark days of the world war, when gasoline was rationed to a couple of gallons per week and rubber tires were nonexistent, the story was told of the motorist who stopped at a remote gas station in Maine, counted out his remaining coupons, and asked for one and a half gallons of gas. "Why so little?" the old attendant asked inquisitively. "That's all the coupons I got." "What do you mean? What's a 'coupon?'" (Exasperated:) "The coupons that entitle you to buy gas. Hell, we've had them since Pearl Harbor." "Pearl Harbor? What's that?" The motorist stops, and slowly a look of rapture floods his face: "Mister, never mind the gas. Just give me four brand-new tires." Somebody ought to ask the question whether anyone in Washington who has no idea who Colonel North is has any idea whether it really matters what Colonel North did.

The business of being tried by your peer, which is the governing rubric in these matters, makes you begin to wonder whether there isn't a connection between finding Colonel North's "peer," and deciding what it is that he is being tried for. He is going to plead a distinction subtle enough to breed ambivalence in political philosophers, but the court is diligently engaged in searching out only truly ignorant Washingtonians. In the bad old days of Mayor Jimmy Walker in the Twenties, he went, in the opinion of the press, just one step too far when he appointed a notoriously simple-minded crony as a judge on the juvenile court of Brooklyn. Accosted the following day by a reporter about the disreputability of the appointment, Mayor Walker smiled and answered that his objective had been to make sure that Brooklyn juveniles would be tried by their peer.

A few years ago I figured in a trial in Washington, and on day two of the trial (we plaintiffs were alleging libel by a racist hate-sheet) the attorney for the defense asked for a mistrial, on the grounds that the *Washington Times* had published a story about the preceding day's activity which was prejudicial to the defense. Solemnly, each of the six jurors was questioned individually by the trial judge. Had they read that morning's issue of the *Washington Times*? No. Had they read that morning's issue of the *Washington Post*? No. *New York Times*? *USA Today*? *Wall Street Journal*? No. Why had they not seen a newspaper that day? Answer: None of the six jurors ever read a newspaper. When the verdict finally came in, a juror explained the reasoning that had guided them in their one-dollar judgment against the defendant. "It's just this simple. Both the parties are pro-Reagan, and anybody who is pro-Reagan is racist, so what's the fuss all about?"

The whole idea of looking for a juror innocent of any knowledge of the facts under contention is to find an unprejudiced evaluator. But the platonic ideal of the unbiased juror presumes a quarrel in which there hasn't been significant national involvement. To find Mrs. Jones, who is unbiased in the matter of Colonel North because she was unaware of him notwithstanding that Colonel North dominated the news in print, on radio, and on television for about three weeks two springs ago isn't to come up with a fine mind which missed the entire episode because she was absorbed in eremitical pursuits, chasing butterflies in Uganda, or worshipping Buddha in India. The probability is that you have come up with a very dumb lady, and to believe that justice is predictably meted out by dumb jurors is taking the business of an

unbiased jury and running just a little bit too far with it.

Granted, the defense hopes to profit from the business of making it difficult to find qualified jurors. And Judge Gesell is spitting mad because ABC has now broadcast those sections of Colonel North's testimony given to Congress which jurors are supposed not to have seen, and has raised the question whether ABC is in contempt of court.

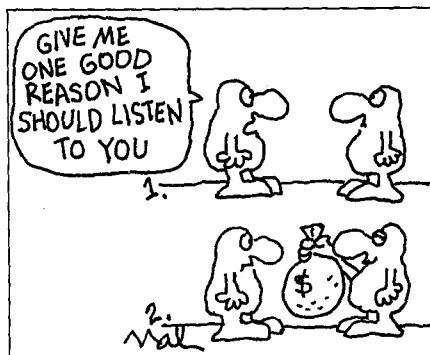
And the whole country is left wondering, really, whether under existing rules Colonel North can get what we think of as a fair trial. □

MAYOR KOCH'S WRINKLED BROW

NEW YORK, FEB. 6

EDWARD KOCH is clearly distracted, as one must assume he will continue to be for much of the time between now and the New York mayoral primaries in September, when it will be decided whether he will have critical endorsement for a fourth term. His problems are, really, three. In the first place, New York after a while tires of everyone, and Ed Koch has been in Gracie Mansion for about as long as 42nd Street was on Broadway, and it closed, finally, last month. Second, he has been surrounded by chiselers. Municipal graft is as America as apple pie, but although no one has laid a finger on Ed Koch, whose personal habits have always been conspicuously frugal, he is held responsible for the density of graft among his backers and associates, some of whom escaped conviction by a hair's breadth.

But above all, Koch faces the determination of the black community and the Left-Jewish community to punish him for his characteristically frank rejection of Jesse Jackson in the primary last spring, when Rabbi Koch lectured his fellow Jews to the effect that they would be crazy to vote for Jesse Jackson. Since a fair number of them proceeded to do so, they are determined to go after the man who called them crazy. Ed Koch saw that what he had done had hurt him greatly in the polls and accordingly retreated, with an endearing simplicity, from the formulation he had used—



though not from the substance of his case against Jackson. But this has not served to thrive him. "They" are going after him.

Now, it makes a great deal of difference to Koch, as it does to New York City, whether the contest shapes up as a Test of Toleration. Professor Arthur Schlesinger, who is the *arbiter elegantiae* of liberal fashion, wrote a few months ago that only bigots would vote against Jesse Jackson. If that were true, the nation is very full of bigots. But since in New York the thing most feared in life, outside of a few enclaves in Queens and Staten Island, is to be called a bigot, the danger is that the voters will come out against Koch so that they can look in the mirror at night and see not a trace of bigotry. In fact when a campaign is set up on that basis, bigotry is inevitably encouraged, even as it was in Chicago when Harold Washington was elected mayor notwithstanding his conspicuous disqualifications, as a convicted felon among others (the day after his election, someone hung a sign outside Chicago's city jail: "Washington Slept Here"). Koch makes the point persuasively that a fight to succeed him shouldn't be a fight to bring in as mayor someone who is black for that reason only. And he further argues that others running in the Democratic primary should declare themselves on this major point by announcing that if Koch wins the primary, they will support him.

Meanwhile, Ed Koch the liberal reformer has, inevitably, learned from his many experiences. Recently he was visited by Bishop Paul Moore, the reigning Episcopal loony in New York, who demanded that Mr. Koch receive the bishop and his delegation to talk about the plight of the homeless. The bishop arrived with many times the pre-stipulated number of accompanists, and it made no difference that Mayor Koch explained to them a five-year-old program to try to cope with the homeless, the protests were already written out, and were handed to the press. Among the bishop's demands were that Mayor Koch find separate apartments for single people who were homeless. No, said Koch, for them we have dormitories. The bishop found this utterly humiliating, which will surprise anyone who has ever served in the army or has been interned in a boarding school. While fighting to make room for the homeless, the mayor faces a \$400-million reduction in the city's share of the state tax pool, a tribute to the extravagance of Governor Cuomo, who is a wonderful manager in the same way that Michael Dukakis is a wonderful manager. Both their states are going broke.

It is in his nature to head to where the protestors gather, in order to talk to them. But nowadays Ed Koch, Reformer, makes a simple stipulation. Either the protestors will talk, or else they will scream and yell. If the latter, the mayor shrugs his shoulders

and drives away. And he has been learning that a considerable majority of the homeless, on whom the city is spending \$33 per person per day, tend to dematerialize when offered concrete jobs. Only to return to the homeless scene a few days or weeks later. Ed Koch is learning, in short, what Roger Starr taught us all many years ago in his book about the disorganized poor. And all this means that when Koch runs again, he will be running not so much as a Democratic Reformer, but as a reformed Democrat. □

WORRYING ABOUT MEDICAL COSTS

NEW YORK, FEB. 9

AN ELDERLY doctor of great wit, learning, and experience thinks he has an idea for the eternal, apparently insoluble problem of the rising cost of medicine. [See also "The Right Medicine," page 27.]

Now this rise in cost appears to be heavily related to the involvement of the Federal Government in medical expenses. Professor Milton Friedman has as usual said it succinctly: Not long ago, the United States spent 4 per cent of its GNP on medicine. Today it spends 10 per cent. And guess what? The government pays 6 per cent of its GNP in medical subsidies.

But Dr. Herbert Berger of Staten Island focuses, for the moment, on malpractice suits and the huge sums that juries award, carried away by their sympathy for the plaintiff and (almost inevitably) confident that after all the cost of a judgment will be paid by an insurance company. The results of this are well known. A physician in Florida needs to spend \$180,000 on malpractice insurance, and, of course, the fee is passed along to his patients (who, in significant numbers, pass the bill along to the government). The result, says Dr. Berger, is not only that the cost of medicine is excessive. There are other more subtle consequences. One of them is early retirement by qualified physicians who deal with a clientele that cannot afford to pay the higher prices and is not protected by the government or by insurance companies. Still another consequence is the extraordinary precautions that many physicians feel they need to take, so that when the kid comes in with what appears to be poison ivy and it turns out to be advanced gonorrhea, the doctor, when facing a jury, can point to his having ordered 16 tests to explore every possibility.

"It has been my lot to testify as a medical expert in many trials. At the conclusion, one frequently hears exclamations such as, 'We'd have won if we had a better lawyer.'" Dr. Berger goes on to

suggest what can only strike one as, well, inconceivable. It is that a movement, presumably led by a non-Nader type, should be launched to sue lawyers whose presentation of their client's case is defective. The suggestion, surely, is difficult to imagine as a likely cure for the problem at hand. A lawyer who fails to persuade a jury that his client has been harmed by a negligent doctor is not often guilty of gross negligence. And since many of these lawyers are suing on a contingency basis, charging their clients only a percentage of the award, it is unlikely that they would proceed with actionable negligence.

Even so, the idea is interesting, to the extent that it encourages harsher treatment by the courts of ambulance-chasing lawyers. I like enormously the example Dr. Berger gives: "Perhaps an example of the miscarriage of justice is in order. A lady was awarded \$800,000 because she lost her navel after an operation for an umbilical hernia. The navel is always sacrificed after such a procedure. Her result was excellent. The only use for a navel that I had ever heard of was that it was a handy place to keep salt when eating celery in bed."

No doubt there are lawyers who can persuade a jury that the loss of a handy receptacle for one's salt when lying in bed is a serious deprivation. But Dr. Berger is clearly correct in suggesting that laws need to be passed by the states, perhaps patterned after Florida's law that seeks to limit awards for mental anguish. It is one thing to award a patient a substantial sum of money for the loss, say, of a finger. But to add a million dollars for mental anguish is an invitation to judicial extortion.

And it is unquestionably true that state legislatures would react more forcefully if the resentment were more palpable. But as the Federal Government absorbs more and more of the cost of the entire medical enterprise the question becomes abstract. If a doctor can pass along his insurance fees to his patient, who in turn passes them along to the Federal Government, the pressures for reform attenuate: and years go by and nothing happens—except a rise in medical expenses.

THE BUSH Administration is going to have to face the problem of out-of-sight medical costs. The official in charge of recommending sensible reform would do well to call in Joseph Califano, who was secretary of HEW under Carter and explored deeply the question of controlling health costs, which findings he incorporated in his book, *America's Health-Care Revolution*, published several years ago. There is nothing more useful in town than a reformed Democratic heavy-spender. A meeting between the new head of HHS, Dr. Louis Sullivan, Joe Califano, and Dr. Berger should be run in prime time. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

TRANS-O-GRAM / KEM PUTNEY

DEFINITIONS

A. Coin collector	NUMISMATIS
	163 154 98 42 60 182 6 169 77 14
	194
B. Name of eight English kings	EDWARD
	183 106 139 48 76 17
C. Wealth	AFFLUENCE
	40 1 155 92 52 199 66 28 150
D. Whip	LASH
	68 111 147 195
E. City in southwest Pennsylvania	PITTSBURGH
	152 9 164 84 103 22 177 16 131 56
F. Hot political topic	ECONOMY
	157 144 80 49 69 135 100
G. With no final results	INCONCLUSIVE
	47 200 11 101 193 78 53 141 153 88
	115 123
H. "Great is your _____ in heaven." (Matthew 5:12)	REWARD
	93 129 50 113 178 21
I. Cartoonist's exaggeration	CARICATURE
	117 34 125 168 90 196 13 146 158 75
J. From diverse sources	ECCLECTIC
	126 137 7 120 186 24 162 70
K. Confused	ADDLED
	104 149 31 41 171 54
L. Southern state, even so (2 words)	NORTHCAROL
	174 134 35 55 25 95 181 5 15 1142
	185 105 65

M. U.S. "no-knock" trade policy? (hyph.)	DEPENDOR
	116 197 64 160 3 108 29 45
N. Miser	TIGHTWAD
	189 191 161 85 119 59 8 38
O. Captain Ahab's weapon	HARPOON
	165 91 128 198 94 51 81
P. Instructed	EDIFIED
	151 190 159 43 170 18 114
Q. Monopoly game asset	RAILROAD
	176 71 136 30 184 83 99 10
R. Aspect	PHASE
	156 132 109 33 61
S. Sign of the zodiac	ARIES
	79 57 188 37 107
T. Servile follower	LACKEY
	72 124 167 96 86 23
U. Food fish	SQUAD
	97 32 173 143
V. Destroy	ERADICATE
	148 19 130 175 26 39 187 63 4
W. Amaze	ASTOUND
	118 172 82 44 12 133 67
X. Young man	LAD
	180 62 127
Y. City in central Pennsylvania	ALTOONA
	179 112 36 140 58 46 73
Z. Examine anew	REASSESS
	102 2 145 121 138 166 27 89
a. Upset	MIDFEE
	74 110 87 122 20 192

1 F	2 Z	3 M	4 V	5 L	6 A	7 J		8 N	9 E	10 Q		11 G	12 W	13 I	14 A		15 L	16 E	17 B	18 P	19 V	20 a
C	E	D	E	R	A	L		A	L	D		C	U	T	S		O	R	D	E	R	E
21 H		22 E	23 T		24 J	25 L	26 V	27 Z		28 C	29 M	30 Q	31 K		32 U	33 R	34 I	35 L	36 Y	37 S	38 N	
D		B	Y		T	H	I	S		C	O	L	D		H	E	A	R	T	E	D	
39 V	40 C	41 K	42 A	43 P	44 W	45 M	46 Y	47 C	48 B	49 F		50 H	51 Q	52 C	53 G	54 K		55 E	56 E	57 S	58 Y	59 N
C	A	L	I	E	O	R	N	I	A	N		W	O	U	L	D		T	H	R	O	W
	60 A	61 R	62 X	63 V	64 M		65 L	66 C	67 W		68 D	69 F	70 J	71 Q	72 T		73 Y	74 a	75 I	76 B	77 A	78 G
	S	E	A	T	E		A	N	D		L	O	C	A	L		A	M	E	R	I	C
79 S		80 F	81 O	82 W	83 Q		84 E	85 N	86 T		87 a	88 G	89 Z	90 I	91 O	92 c		93 H	94 O	95 L	96 T	97 U
W		O	N	T	O		T	H	E		F	I	S	M	A	L		R	O	C	K	S
	98 A	99 Q	100 F	101 G	102 Z	103 E		104 K	105 L	106 B		107 S	108 M	109 R	110 a	111 D	112 Y		113 H	114 P	115 G	116 M
	M	A	Y	O	R	S		A	N	D		S	O	R	I	A	L		A	D	V	O
117 I	118 W	119 N	120 J	121 Z		122 a	123 G	124 T	125 I	126 J	127 X		128 O	129 H	130 V	131 E	132 R	133 W	134 L	135 F	136 Q	137 J
C	A	T	E	S		F	E	A	R	E	D		R	E	A	G	A	N	O	M	I	C
138 Z		139 B	140 Y	141 G	142 L	143 U		144 F	145 Z	146 I	147 D	148 V		149 K	150 C	151 P	152 E		153 G	154 A	155 C	156 R
S		W	O	U	L	D		C	A	U	S	E		D	E	E	P		S	U	F	F
157 F	158 I	159 P	160 M	161 N		162 J	163 A		164 E	165 O	166 Z		167 T	168 I	169 A	170 P	171 K	172 W		173 U	174 L	175 V
E	R	E	N	G		I	N		T	H	E		C	I	T	I	E	S		A	N	D
	176 Q	177 E	178 I	179 Y	180 X		181 L	182 A	183 B	184 Q	185 L	186 J	187 V		188 S	189 N		190 P	191 N	192 a	193 G	194 A
	R	U	R	A	L		A	M	E	R	I	C	A		I	T		D	I	D	N	T
	195 D	196 I	197 M	198 O	199 C	200 G																
	H	A	P	P	E	N																

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition.

See page 60 for solution to last Trans-O-GRAM.



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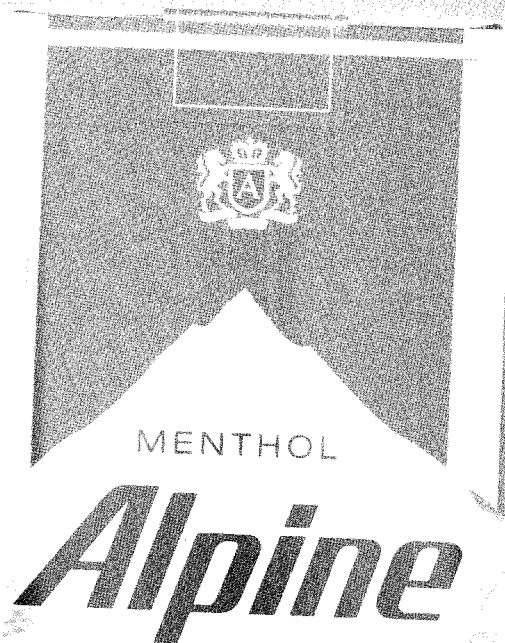
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